



金色の

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十本スライ

iii
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文字使い

勇者四人に
巻き込まれた
ユニークチート



ファンタジア文庫

KONJIKI NO WORD MASTER

– Golden Word Master –

- Volume 1 -

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– SYNOPSIS –

Five people summoned to another world to battle the demon lord who threatens that world.

However, there were only supposed to be four heroes that were summoned; the other was an innocent bystander.

What will the innocent bystander do next?

「なかなか美味しい。やるな、お前」

▶ アノールド・オーシャン

Lv. 31 HP:265/315
MP:148/158
《化装特性》風
《称号》風の友・料理人...

ミュアの保護者で大剣
使いの冒険者

「ああもう、
俺の分もちゃんと残せよう！」

「わたし、ご飯の用意するね！」

▶ ヒイロ・オカムラ

Lv. 23 HP:376/387 MP:915/990
《魔法》文字魔法
(一文字解放・空文字解放)
《称号》巻き込まれた者・
異世界人・文字使い...

異世界に召喚された高校生。
綴った文字のイメージを具現
化する《文字魔法》を使う

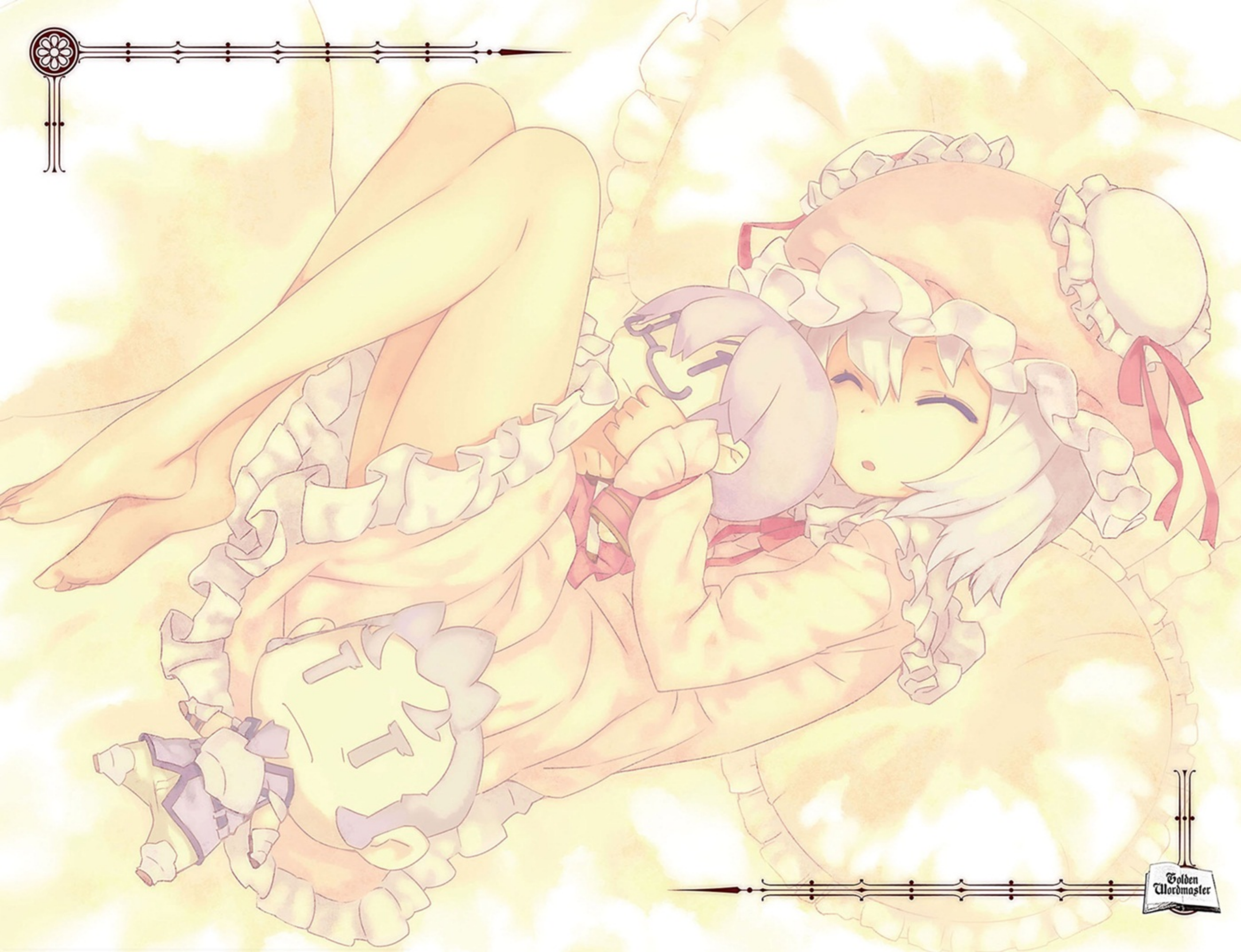
▶ ミュア・カストレイア

Lv. 13 HP:89/111 MP:82/82
《称号》奪われた者・我慢の子...

アノールドと旅を共にする少女

金色の
文字使い

勇者四人に
巻き込まれた
ユニークチート



PROLOGUE

After the sun had set and the surroundings had become quiet, the crackling sounds of a bonfire echoed around the surrounding area.

“Ahh, hoooot. Here, it’s done Muir.”

“Thanks, Uncle.”

The man named Arnold took the grilled fish from the bonfire and passed it to the girl sitting next to him named Muir.

Muir blew softly on the hot fish and began stuffing her cheeks with it.

Arnold glared at the other member of their group with scornful eyes, sighed and said.

“Oi, how long are you going to read that book for Hihiro? I’ll eat everything if you don’t hurry up and come eat.”

While resting against the tree, Hihiro Okamura closed his book with a light thud, narrowed his eyes and glared at Arnold.

“If you do that...”

Hihiro pointed his index finger towards Arnold and his fingertips began to faintly glow in a blueish-white light. Arnold who saw this happening started to panic.

“I-I’m joking! Don’t point that towards me.”

Watching Arnold swiftly backing away Hihiro lowered his finger. Muir smiled wryly at Arnold as he let out a big sigh of relief.

rustle rustle

Their senses twitched.

“...There’s something there.” As Hihiro said those words the two nodded at the same time. Arnold gently touched Muir’s back.

“Muir, get back.”

“O-okay.”

With a loud noise, a huge shadow appeared from behind the tall grass.

“That’s...” After confirming the appearance of the enemy that had appeared bathed in moonlight; Hiro placed his hand on his chin and muttered to himself in an effort to remember. While he was doing that, Arnold grinned.

“Ooh, isn’t this a blast from the past? It’s a Barbarous Bear. Come to think of it, when we first met Hihiro we also fought this monster together, ay.”

“Did we?”

It wasn’t just one but two Barbarous Bears that appeared.

“Al-righty Hihiro, leave the one that just appeared to me.”

Arnold drew out his great sword and held it towards the centre of his body while ignoring what Hihiro was saying from behind him. Of course Arnold had thought that Hihiro had said “YES” but...

“I refuse. I’m hungry right. With just that many, can’t you do something about them yourself, Old Man?”

“Hey! Y-you bastard!”

Then one of the Barbarous Bear’s threw a rock at Arnold.

“Urghh!”

He quickly dodged and panted loudly.

“Whoa, that was dangerous...”

“Pay attention, Old Man. *munch munch*.”

“What are you eating?! You’re unbelievable, you bastard!”

Hihiro continued to eat the grilled fish without paying any attention to the battle that was happening in front of him. Looking at Hihiro doing as he pleased, Arnold was struck with shock. Hihiro made a quick sideways glance at Arnold and said,

“Hmm. Is it over already?”

“It’s not over yet! Help out!”

“Uncle! Behind you!”

“Eh, ooops?!”

Once again the Barbarous Bear threw a rock towards Arnold but thanks to Muir’s shout, he was able to safely avoid it. Then Arnold pointed his finger towards Hihiro.

“Listen up Hihiro! In the first place, that fish was something I caught! If you want to eat then fight! Oh and I forgot to mention this but Barbarous Bear meat tastes amazing!”

After hearing those words, Hihiro stopped eating, silently got up and started moving towards Arnold.

“You should have said that the meat tastes good earlier.”

Seeing Hihiro’s eyes sparkle, Arnold dropped his shoulders and let out a sigh.

“...Argh, enough. Hurry up and kill it.”

“U-um Uncle, do your best.”

“Aah, as I thought Muir’s so cute. Alright, I feel great! Go over there and don’t move.”

“O-okay.”

Muir then looked up at Hihiro while slightly blushing.

“U-um Hihiro-san as well... Um... Please be careful. Please don’t get hurt... Okay?”

“Of course. Go look after my fish and don’t let it get spoiled, Chibi.”

“Um, okay!”

Seeing Muir smiling so happily, Arnold stared at Hihiro with an unpleasant feeling.

“Oi, hey, I have a feeling that recently Muir’s attitude towards you and me are different?”

“It’s just your imagination.”

“Nope. I’m sure of it! In the first place, Muir is my daughter, I absolutely won’t give her to...”

“It’s coming, Idiot Parent.”

Monsters started appearing and interrupted Arnold.

“Urgh enough! Read the air you half-wit!”

Arnold leaped into the sky, raised his great sword and slashed downward with all his might. *slash* the sword found its target and cut through the enemy.

“Alright! Now... Eeeeh?!?!”

Arnold saw three more bears appear from behind the first and unsurprisingly yelled in shock.

“H-hey Hihiro...”

“Aah, what a pain. I guess there’s no choice. Move, Old Man.”

Hiro glared at the four monsters gathering in front of him and just like he’d done earlier to Arnold, pointed his index finger towards the monsters.

When a blueish-white light started to softly emanate from his fingertips, Hihiro began to move his finger.

His finger moved to write something in the air, the letters were connected by the blueish-white light which left faint traces. Once he had finished, there was a character floating in the air.

《BURST 【爆】》

That is indeed a character written in Japanese.

“Burst open, 《Word Magic》 ”

The words acted like a trigger and flew straight at the monsters just like a bullet.

Kaboom

As soon as the character touched the monster’s body, a tremendous explosion occurred.

The surrounding monsters were also swallowed up in the explosion.

“Mmm, your magic’s still as strange as ever.”

Arnold went to confirm that the earlier explosion had done its job. Looking at the aftermath, his cheeks began to twitch as he thought about how Hihiro’s magic had been aimed at him earlier.

“W-well it’s safe now. Let’s settle down and eat.”

“Hurry up and prepare the meat, Lolicon.”

“Who’s the Lolicon? Who’s...!”

As Arnold was saying that, Muir puffed out her cheeks and in a loud voice said. “Y-you can’t fight! H-hihiro-san too!”

“Hmph...”

“The angry Muir is cute too.”

Hihiro looked at Arnold, who was getting scolded with a bewitched look on his face and thought to himself. (He’s definitely a lolicon.)

Muir started fidgeting with her fingers as she moved closer to Hihiro.

“U-um Hihiro-san?”

“Yeah? What?”

“W-what... Is that injury...?”

“Don’t worry about it. I won’t get beaten by a monster of that level now, will I?”

“T-that’s right, hehehe, as expected of... Hiiro-san”

“Anyways, let’s continue with our meal.”

“Oh. I’ll start preparing! I want to try make the delicious sauce that Uncle taught me recently! Please eat it with the fish!”

“Oh, I can’t wait.”

Seeing how Hiiro’s face had brightened up, Muir started trotting towards the place where their bags were kept.

Suddenly, Hiiro looked up to the night sky and saw thousands of stars just floating there looking like they were about to fall at any moment.

(Now that I think about it, it’s been a while since I’ve arrived in this world. Even now, I still can’t believe it...to think that I would be summoned to another world. On top of that, I’ve somehow gotten mixed up with those summoned heroes. I really wonder why all of this has happened.)

While enjoying the smell of the roasting meat, Hiiro thought about how he first came to this other world 《Edea》 .

CHAPTER 1

DRAGGED INTO ANOTHER WORLD

Hiiro Okamura calmly analysed the scene in front of his eyes. There were people he had never seen before.

Hiiro saw that there were several men dressed like priests, which is a rare sight in Japan and amongst them was a girl wearing a pink dress.

He gazed around to check out his surroundings. The building he was in was an atrium, so he could clearly see outside even while sitting down, but not only did he see the ground, he could also see a mountain range in the distance. Based on what he could see, Hiiro concluded the place he was at was fairly high up.

This building was either a tower or something similar. The ceiling was supported by several pillars covered in strange drawings that Hiiro had never seen before. There were mysterious drawings similar to images on Egyptian murals.

The only things recognizable were the four people near him who were wearing the same high school uniform.

They were his classmates, but he had never talked to them before. Hiiro thought to himself, (Why am I here with these people?)

A magic circle like the kind found in games was drawn under his feet.

It was obvious to Hiiro that the strangely dressed people were foreign, he was somewhere with an unfamiliar scenery and there was a magic circle drawn on the floor.

Looking at his current situation, he could guess what had happened to him. The girl in the dress also confirmed it with her words.

“W-welcome, Heroes!” she said.

Yeah, this was a so-called different world.

Hihiro should have been at school until a while ago. From noon, he skipped class and slept on the rooftop the whole time. After school, he went to fetch his bag from the classroom. That was where he found the four people who now stood before him in this other world.

Like always, he headed for his desk without glancing at them. They had frowned a bit upon seeing him, but since he wasn't interested in them, he ignored them.

But suddenly a dazzling light gushed out from under his feet. The five people present, including Hihiro, were frozen on the spot from the sudden surprise.

In front of him, everything had turned as white as snow and before he knew it, he found himself in the current situation.

The people dressed like priests cheered things like, "Hooray!" and "It's a success!" while ignoring the confusion of the five people.

However, they all looked quite exhausted and were sweating as if they were running a marathon.

On the other hand, no one would think that the girl was Japanese with her long waist-length wavy orange hair. She was a pretty girl with big eyes and adorable facial features.

She was without a doubt an eye-catching beauty.

Just like the men, she relaxed into a smile. Most likely the five of them were summoned.

It was a common occurrence in light novels. But this was a real fantasy world, it was definitely not a light novel.

Hihiro never imagined that something like this could happen to him. Although he was calmly analysing the situation, there was a part of him that refused to believe it.

The others who were summoned together with Hihiro felt the same as him, as their faces showed that they couldn't keep up with what had happened to them. Then finally one of them spoke.

"H-heroes? What do you mean?" The guy's name was Taishi Aoyama, he had dyed-

brown hair but an earnest face and gentle aura.

In addition, he was a tall, charming and handsome guy, so he was overwhelmingly popular with the girls in class.

Upon hearing Taishi's question, the girl quickly lowered her head.

"Ah, my apologies! His Majesty will personally explain the matter to you! So if you would please follow me!" She looked apologetic as she said that. Upon closer inspection, she seemed rather pale.

It was hard to tell from her smile earlier, but like the men, she was exhausted from the summoning and sweating heavily.

Taishi seemed to notice her condition as well and likely thought that it would be better to listen to her for now instead of staying here any longer. That way the girl would probably get some rest.

Taishi exchanged looks with everyone except Hiroyuki and gave a nod of affirmation. "Okay. I have a rough idea of what's happening, but we'll listen to what you have to say."

It seems that the other four people have also somewhat grasped their situation.

With that, guided by the girl, the five of them headed towards the 《Throne Room》 where the King was. Hiroyuki didn't neglect to observe the surrounding area on their way towards the throne room.

Judging by the colour of the hair and eyes of the servants and soldiers stationed here and there around the castle, Hiroyuki once again concluded that this was not Japan.

The building they had been in was indeed a tower which stood in the middle of a big castle.

"Ooh, thank you for coming here Heroes." The man sitting on the throne said with a gentle smile. (There was no need to tell him that they didn't come here of their own free will.)

"I am sure you must be confused about the abrupt nature and strange circumstances

surrounding your current situation. But rest assured, I will explain everything now.” After saying that, he first started with a self-introduction.

This kingdom’s name was 【The Human Kingdom: Victorias】 . The king unified the 『Human Race』 of this world, 【Edea】 in this kingdom.

There are three continents in this world and each race has its own country. Each race is separated into four groups.

Rudolph: “We are the 『Human Race』 . The 『Beastman』 and 『Demon-kin』 have a country, but the 『Spirit Race』 does not have a country. The spirit race hardly interacts with the other races, so most people have never seen them before.”

Sitting in front of Hiroyuki and the other four was Rudolph van Strauss Alcaheim, the reigning King of 【Victorias】 .

Next to him sat the Queen Maris and the girl who guided them here was Lilith, the first princess.

『Human Race』 , 『Beastman』 and 『Demon-kin』 . Right now the tension between these three races are unprecedentedly high. In particular, the Demon King is planning to destroy the human race.

Rudolph: “The demon-kin possess powerful magic power and high physical ability. They battle viciously. And they wish to take control of 【Edea】 .”

Magic exists in this world and naturally, the higher your magic power, the more powerful the magic you can use. Yes, this is a fantasy world in which having magic is normal.

The human race also possesses magic, but the amount of magic they have is relatively low.

Rudolph: “There are adventure guilds in this world, but while facing the 『Demon-kin』 who are accustomed to battle, even high ranking adventurers often have to form teams. The demon-kin are just too strong.”

The king who feared that they would be annihilated sooner or later at this rate, thought about eliminating the demon-kin before that could happen, therefore, he resorted to using the sealed ancient summoning magic.

Summoning magic wasn't omnipotent, as it was sealed for some reason.

Summoning magic consumes a lot of magic power and if used by an untalented person, the magic would 《Rebound》 and lash back at the person who used it.

Summoning magic is essentially something only the royal family can use, but, of course there are risks when using it. Failed attempts can result in being exposed to enormous amounts of powerful magic leading the user to suffer a mental breakdown. In the worst case, 《Rebound》 can even cause death.

So King Rudolph had an idea. He had a few daughters, so he chose them to use the summoning magic.

At this rate, the human race will be annihilated. In order to avoid that, it was necessary to summon Heroes from another world at all costs.

Old documents told tales of Heroes being summoned in the past and saving the human race from a terrible calamity.

When Rudolph learnt of this, he hardened his heart and asked his daughters. Both the fourth and third princesses had both failed and lost their lives from the rebound effect.

(... He sacrificed his own daughters?) Hihiro thought.

Hihiro stared at Rudolph unpleasantly when he heard of his decision, but speaking up here would make things complicated, so Hihiro remained silent and continued to listen to the rest of the story.

The Queen grieved over the deaths of her daughters, but she herself was a woman who had married into the royal family from an outside family, so she didn't have pure royal blood and couldn't use summoning magic.

The second princess was next in line, even though she had managed to avoid death, she was now in a coma.

Rudolph: "The only ones left who could use summoning magic was only Lilith and myself. Since we could not have any more failures, I decided that I had to do it myself."

But everyone was against it. If the king was to pass away, the country would lose its support. The demon-kin will take advantage of that situation and the kingdom will be instantly destroyed.

Lilith understood that and offered herself to her country.

"I was also afraid, but this was something that I could do for my country. I put my heart into the summoning magic." Lilith quietly quivers her small lips.

Lilith: "The ceremony was held using the magic powers of the priests and myself as the medium. During the ceremony, I felt my conscious fading and while preparing myself for death, I thought that this task was impossible for me as well. But at that time, the magic circle released a radiant light."

And then five people appeared.

(I see, so that woman's pale complexion was due to the effects of the summon magic, huh.) Hiiro thought.

Even though Lilith is currently sitting on a chair, her complexion was still pale. Hiiro analysed whether or not this was due to the rebound effect.

"I see. So you summoned us here to protect the humans from the demon-kin?" Said Taishi Aoyama who had nodded many times while listening to the explanation.

Rudolph: "Yes. According to the old documents, there are four Heroes in total. Hmm? Come to think of it, I've just noticed there's... Five people here."

Exactly, there were five people summoned this time. Rudolph looked questioningly at the scholar near him and asked him what it meant. The scholar adjusted his glasses, flustered and said.

Scholar: "I-I do not know! But, are all of them Heroes...?"

"Hmm... Then we just have to find out. All of you, try and check your abilities." Rudolph had said, but Hiiro and the others tilted their heads puzzled.

Rudolph: “Hmm? What is the matter? Do not tell me that you are unable to check your abilities?”

“That’s right...” Tashi answered as their representative.

Rudolph: “Hmm, you just have to think 《Status》 .”

Everyone did as they were told. Of course, Hiiro tried it as well. When he recited 《Status》 in his mind, a status screen like the ones found in games, appeared before him.

Hiiro Okamura
Lv 1
HP: 24/24
MP: 120/120
EXP: 0
NEXT: 10
ATK: 13
DEF: 8
AGI: 27
HIT: 11
INT: 23
《 Magic Attribute》 None
《 Magic》 Word Magic (Single Chain Release)
《 Titles》 Innocent Bystander • Otherworlder • Word Master

(Isn’t this just like a game? Well, it’s an easy enough system to understand... What a strange world.) Many questions arose in Hiiro’s mind. He understood why his level was one. If this was an RPG-like world, it was only natural for someone like him, who has not had any battle experience, to be level 1.

But why was his MP [magic power] so high? As he had heard earlier, this must be the benefit of being an otherworlder.

By the way, HP refers to health points, MP was magic power, EXP was experience

points and NEXT indicates the necessary experience points required to advance to the next level. ATK, DEF, AGI, HIT and INT respectively represent attack power, defence, agility, hit chance and intelligence. These expressions are often used in games.

Hiiro was surprised that his agility was high, but what he was most surprised about was this:

《Innocent Bystander》

This title perfectly explained that he was just dragged along with the other four heroes. In other words, he himself wasn't a hero; he was just an ordinary person.

Although he was concerned about his magic, he would rather think about how to explain this situation.

While he was thinking, Rudolph asked them. "How is it? 《Status》 is something only you can see but you all should have the title of Heroes, right?"

The first person to answer was, of course, Taishi. "Y-yes, it's there! Hero is written in the title column! Uwah ~ awesome, I'm really a hero."

He uttered in a somewhat excited voice. "Chika, what about you?"

The person who answered Taishi's question was Chika Suzumiya. She was a talkative and popular girl in class. Her open and direct attitude while dealing with people gave her their goodwill.

Chika had short hair which was dyed in a brown colour a bit lighter than Taishi's. Her chest was somewhat lacking, but being a sports ace, she had a slender body which was admired by both the girls and boys.

Chika: "Yeah, I have it too, Taishi."

"Good. What about Shuri and Shinobu?" He called out to the two girls near him.

Shuri Minamoto had beautiful glossy long black hair. Unlike Chika, she had a voluptuous body that attracted boys. She belonged to the tea ceremony club and the boys would sometimes come to ogle at her in her kimono. Her charm points were her drooping eyes and the mole under her eye.

The other girl, Shinobu Akamori was brimming with curiosity. She was a member of the newspaper club and it seems that she plans to find employment in that field of work in the future. She was a smart and talkative person, so everyone would often ask her for tips on the exams. Her slightly wavy, navy blue hair hung over her shoulders. Her cat like eyes gave the impression that she never let her prey go.

What these three girls had in common was that they were all without a doubt, eye-catchingly beautiful. As members of Taishi's harem, they were always with him.

Shuri and Shinobu also seem to have the Hero title too.

"Huh? Why can we understand these words? The 《Status》 is written in words familiar to us..." It was only natural for Taishi to ask this question. The other three also thought about asking the same question. Hiroyuki had wondered about it too but having Taishi ask it had saved him a lot of time and effort.

The citizens of this world must have understood Japanese if they were able to communicate with them. The person who answered Taishi's question was Lilith. "According to old documents, 《Status》 is deciphered and translated into the language of the world you Heroes come from. Conversations are also interpreted this way as well."

It was a very handy system. If this system wasn't in place, it'd naturally take too much time and effort to understand what the people from this world were saying.

'Well, in any case, I can't deny that it's a great opportunity...'

The language of this world is called 《Ranaris》. Written text is instantly translated into a language that Hiroyuki and the others understand, but if you want to write in this world's language, it is necessary to study it.

It seems that the four people here have proved that they were heroes. Then everyone turned their glazes towards Hiroyuki.

Rudolph: "What about you?"

"...Nope." Hiiro answered with a single word. With that, the other people started to make a ruckus.

Rudolph: "If you are not a hero... Can you tell us what kind of title you hold?"

Hiiro was annoyed that he was being talked down to, nevertheless he answered honestly, but he only gave one title. "《Innocent Bystander》..."

When they heard that, the attitude of his four classmates changed. They frowned and left their mouths agape in disbelief.

Rudolph: "《Innocent Bystander》...? Lilith, do you know what that means?"

"Eh, umm...yes. M-most likely that..." Lilith looked downwards, hesitant to answer. Hiiro sighed while looking at her and answered instead.

"I'm just an ordinary person. I just happened to be in the classroom at that time and got mixed up with these guys. Right?"

Lilith: "Uh... Uhm..."

"Hey, wait! Okamura! What's with that tone?" Chika said while pointing at Hiiro. He completely ignored her and continued talking.

"Originally only four people should have been summoned here, that's these four here. So to speak, I'm an irregular existence. So how do you intend to correct this?" Hiiro stated indifferently without any hostility or murderous intent. And yet, Lilith turned pale as she had been the one who had summoned them.

Hiiro: "Well, it's not just about me. These guys were also called to this world by your own convenience. I'm sure our families back home are worried sick about us."

Lilith's expression became more and more heartbroken. After hearing how sound Hiiro's statement sounded, the surrounding people started to cause a ruckus. Rudolph then raised his hands to silence them.

The King said in an apologetic voice, "You are right, I did not think about your

circumstances when I summoned you.” Hihiro thought that the king would make up excuses, but it seemed like the King was unexpectedly aware of the significance of their actions.

Rudolph: “But, we were left with no other choices.”

Hihiro: “Well, not like I honestly care about it anyways.”

“Huh?” Time stopped for everyone upon hearing Hihiro’s words.



Hiiro: "I have no connection whatsoever with these four."

"Hey, hey Okamura! Aren't we classmates?!" Taishi shouted at Hiiro angrily.

Hiiro: "Yeah, we're classmates. But that was something that the school decided. The only connection we have is studying in the same class, right? I think the bond we have is pretty much non-existent."

Taishi: "Th-that's going too far..."

"Yeah, after we finally got put together in the same class~"

Shuri and Shinobu also shared their opinions.

Hiiro: "So you say but it's been five months since we got put together in the same class and I haven't spoken a single word to any one of you."

It was true. Hiiro basically liked to be alone, so he kept his distance from everyone, not just these four. Sleep, eat and read; that was Hiiro's routine.

Eating and sleeping were Hiiro's purposes in life.

If the gluttonous gourmet Hiiro heard that there was delicious food outside of his prefecture, he would go out of his way to ride his bike there.

If he heard that there was a limit of 100 super delicious Daifuku being sold, he would line up the day before just to get his hands on it. People have often called him a 《Food Pursuer》 .

As for reading, whenever Hiiro had time he would stop by the school library, because of that there were students and teachers who called him the 《Library Dweller》 .

He would even travel to libraries that were further away to fulfil his thirst for knowledge.

He was so enthusiastic about reading that there were times when he shut himself inside of his room and read books borrowed from the library without eating or drinking for three days; there were even times when he collapsed from shutting himself in.

They were certainly classmates, but they've never talked until now. Hiiro didn't need any friends if he could eat and read.

Taishi and the others thought that Hiiro was someone whom was very hard to approach and so they never tried talking to him.

Upon hearing Hiiro's words, the four could only remain silent as they weren't able to refute his statement.

Hiiro: "Now then, as I said earlier, I have nothing to do with these people. The ones you want are these four heroes, right? So you shouldn't need me here."

"Mm-mmph..." Rudolph groaned with a difficult expression. He was perplexed about how to answer.

Hiiro: "Since they're heroes, they're able to fight with the demon-kin in some way, right? But I'm just an ordinary person. You wouldn't seriously suggest that someone like me should go fight opponents as dangerous as that, would you?"

Rudolph: "... Then let me hear it. What would you wish to do?"

Hiiro: "Can I return to my original world?"

"The documents say that the 『Demon King』 should know of magic able to return you to your original world."

Rudolph's words resounded throughout the throne room and Lilith's expression darkened at once. Seeing that, Hiiro quietly shut his eyes. Then Taishi interrupted their conversation.

"S-so we just have to hurry up and take out the Demon King!"

(What an idiot.) Hiiro thought. Even if the Demon King knew of such magic, why would you defeat him? Hiiro was disgusted at Taishi's thoughtless statement.

"Hmm. That is exactly right. Besides our country is magnificent, I am sure you will find it to your liking. You are all basically a part of my family now." Seeing Rudolph desperately trying to persuade him. Hiiro thought that he looked pretty pathetic and shrugged his shoulders.

“Ah, well it’s not just Okamura. I’m also worried about the family I left behind.” The others also felt worried, not just Chika.

“Th-there is no need to worry about that. Isn’t that right?” Rudolf addressed a nearby scholar. The scholar was shaken by suddenly being asked and looked down many times while answering.

Scholar: “Ah, y-yes! A-as a matter of fact, any records of your existence has been wiped from your original world!”

“Wi-wiped you say?!” It was quite a shocking statement. The other three also had shocked expression on their faces just like Taishi.

Scholar: “Ah, no, please do not worry! There are forces at work in your original world keeping things coherent. When you return, everything will go back to normal... Yes.”

Taishi averted his eyes. Hiiro thought about the suspicious behaviour of the scholar.

(That’s... A lie.) Hiiro definitely felt that from the scholar’s actions.

‘They’ve surely told nothing but lies so far. It’s most likely some excuse to meant to convince us. Return magic, in other words a way for us to get back to our original world... Doesn’t exist. At least not right now.’

He looked at the other four to see if any of them had realized this fact.

Taishi hadn’t notice at all. Chika was the same. Only Shuri and Shinobu were frowning at those words, Hiiro wasn’t sure if it was because they realized that what was being said to them was suspicious or if it was just because they were too shocked to move.

‘Well, it’s not like I care if we’re able to return or not. I... Can live just about anywhere.’

Hiiro Okamura was raised in an orphanage. It wasn’t like his parents left him there, they had passed away in an accident when he was still young.

After that, he was brought to the orphanage and raised there. He made some friends there, but he loved books even more than that so he pretty much spent most of his time reading various books.

He thought that books deserved to be called his friends more than humans did.

Of course he had other relatives, but there was no reason for him to return to his world. It wouldn't trouble him even if they didn't find a way to return.

Lilith who knew that there was no way to return had a clouded expression on her face for a while now. She was probably feeling guilty over lying.

After hearing from Rudolph that there was no way to return, Taishi and the girls started to talk about what they should do from here on.

"Certainly, like Okamura said, you called us here at your own convenience. I think that was very selfish of you to do." Rudolph looked sullen at being told that by Taishi as well.

"But still..." While saying that, Taishi looked at the three girls. They all chuckled and he once again looked at Rudolph.

Taishi: "We'll do it!"

"Re-really, you will?" Rudolph raised his voice.

"Yes, we were just talking about wanting to travel in a world such as this back in the classroom."

"Yeah! The four of us played a lot of MMORPGs together!" As Chika had said, it seems that the four of them played MMORPGs together in their world.

They would often meet up after school to discuss about which places to venture to next. Right before they were summoned to this world, they had been discussing their desire to venture into a game like world like this one.

Rudolph: "Th-then you're up to the task!"

"Yes, but in exchange..." Shinobu spoke after the king.

Shinobu: "From what I can see in the status, we still seem to be level 1. In other words, we're still beginners, right?"

Rudolph: “Y-yes, that is correct.”

Shinobu: “I think that it’s impossible to fight the demon-kin like this. So...I want you to teach us how to fight.”

Rudolph: “You do not need to worry about that. That matter will be...”

At that time, a person clad in armour appeared from among the soldiers.

“I will explain things from here Heroes.” As he spoke he kneeled down and lowered his head.

“My name is Vale Kimble. I was entrusted with the duty of teaching you how to fight.”

Rudolph: “Incidentally, he is the captain of the second division of our army.”

He was a handsome man with a sharp face. You could tell how well trained he was by looking at his body. He had short green hair and a sense of great willpower shone through his eyes.

Naturally, the gazes of females focused on him. Only Chika stared at him emotionlessly because she wasn’t interested in him.

Shinobu: “In other words, that hunk is going to train us?”

Vale: “Yes, right now matters have quietened down at the borders, but before things start to heat up again, I want you heroes to grow stronger.”

Shinobu: “Ah, where will we be living?”

Rudolph: “We have prepared rooms for you here in the castle. Lilith will show you around later.”

The discussion steadily progressed and Taishi and the others seemed to have decided to fight. After that, Lilith finished with explaining the common knowledge of 【Edea】.

After the discussion was finished, Hihiro immediately raised his hand.

“Sorry, but I’ll be moving on my own.”

Upon hearing those words, everyone was flabbergasted as if time had stopped again. Hiiro thought that these people were crazy.

Hiiro: “No, no. Since I don’t have any obligations to this country, there’s no reason for me to fight. Besides, I’m not a hero like these guys. So, there’s no reason for me to be here.”

Rudolph: “Argh... But.”

Hiiro: “Sorry but I’m not as sensible as those four. Well, since I’m finally in a different world, I just want to do as I please. You don’t mind, do you?”

Rudolph looked pensive as he observed Hiiro.

Hiiro was indeed no hero, but just an ordinary person. He didn’t look all that strong either. He had black hair, dark pupils, was 173 centimetres tall and his body wasn’t really muscular.

Hiiro’s only charm point was that he wore glasses. And he himself knew that in terms of looks, he was inferior to Taishi.

If someone was to look at Hiiro, they would think that he was so ordinary that he wouldn’t be able to fight. Rudolph who had been observing Hiiro must have also thought this as well.

However, it was a fact that they had summoned him here. Rudolph thought that it was unreasonable of him to throw Hiiro out without doing anything for him.

Rudolph: “Uh... Umm... There is nothing else I can do but give you my heartfelt apology. Is there anything you want?”

Hiiro: “Nothing.”

Rudolph: “No-nothing, you say?”

Hiiro: “Yeah. Also, it’s not like I resent you. It seems like there are rare books in this world, so it should be quite interesting.”

Hihiro was also a guy, so he also yearned for adventure. He didn't need to have great adventures like the ones protagonists from his books had, but he did want to travel this world and see it for himself.

"Well, I've no more business here so see ya." With that remark Hihiro moved to leave but Taishi grabbed his arm.

Taishi: "Hey! For a while now you keep saying that you're unrelated to this situation. How can you call yourself a man?!"

"What?" Hihiro uttered in an annoyed voice. In order to convey his anger, Taishi had put all his power into grabbing Hihiro.

Taishi: "The people of this country are bowing their heads to us! Don't you think you should at least try and help them out a bit?"

Hihiro: "I do not."

Taishi: "Why not!?"

Hihiro: "Because I'm not a hero. Or what, do you plan to use me like a bulletproof jacket?"

Taishi: "Bu-bulletproof jacket?"

Hihiro shook his hands away when he felt that Taishi's grip had loosened.

"Just leave him be, Taishi." Chika said with a sharp look. It was obvious that she was unimpressed.

Taishi: "Hey, you two agree with me, right?"

"Err...I'm..." Shuri casted her glaze downwards feeling perplexed. She opened her mouth as if to say something. Shinobu just stared rudely at Hihiro and chuckled.

"Ahaha, yeah sure, ain't it fine? This all feels like a game, but it's more or less reality. So basically, we're puttin' our lives on the line here. We're all heroes, so from now on we'll only get stronger. But it's different for Okamura-cchi, he's jus' an ordinary guy. So try puttin' yourself in his shoes." Since Shinobu made a sound argument, the other

three shut up. This wasn't a game. As a matter of fact, people had died in an attempt to summon them to this world. They were serious about it.

"Ri-right. We'll do this with just us." Taishi consented.

Hihiro glanced at them and tried to leave but he heard a voice.

"Uh-uhm!" The voice belonged to Lilith. Hihiro stopped moving and looked over his shoulders.

"Umm... I-I am so sorry!" She looked at him with a worried expression. Hihiro turned his head back and said.

"Don't worry about it." This time he left for sure.

Hihiro left the castle and while walking through the city, he pondered over what to do next.

(Now then, for now, I should go gather information using RPG fundamentals.)

Normally, it would have been better to ask the king but if he stayed in the castle for any longer, there was a chance that he would get dragged into something unexpected. That might make it difficult for him to leave the country.

Besides, there were some soldiers at the castle who felt uncomfortable in Hihiro's presence. It was inevitable that they would feel that way, since he had an attitude.

He left the castle as fast as possible. They have four talented people there with them. He had concluded that he wasn't needed there.

(For now, what's this 《Word Magic》 in my 《Status》's magic column? I somewhat understand what kind of attribute it is. It's probably unattributed magic.)

Hihiro decided to utilize all the knowledge he had gained from games and novels. He also recalled the term 'guild' while thinking about magic. The King had also said that a guild exists in this world.

He decided to ask the townspeople about the location of the guild and found out that it was close by.

For the time being, he headed to the guild to register as an adventurer. Living and travelling here wasn't free. Somehow or another, he had to make money.

Incidentally, the money of this world could be stored in the guild card. It was also possible to pay for goods with the card. That was one of the things that Lilith had taught them back at the castle.

When Hiroyuki arrived at the guild, the inside was bustling with people. Muscular guys, who were most likely adventures, were lined up in front of the various reception counters.

The counter closest to Hiroyuki had the word 'Registration' written on the sign above it.

As his black hair and eyes were unusual, he became the centre of attention as soon as he entered the guild.

It was only natural since he was also wearing an unfamiliar school uniform that people of this world had never seen before. He decided to buy some gear later on. He walked to the counter unconcerned by all the gazes.

"Hey, I want to register." He bluntly stated. The receptionist at the counter just began her explanation with a professional smile.

Various requests are commissioned at the guild. The adventure that completes the commissioned request earned a reward.

These requests are classified into different ranks according to their difficulty level, starting from the lowest: F • E • D • C • B • A • S • SS and the highest SSS rank.

A Guild Card is issued to the adventurer upon registration; it serves the same purpose as the Citizen Cards that all citizens hold. Which meant that it served as an identification card.

The adventurers were also ranked into the same categories as the requests. Although, there were very few adventurers with an S rank or above. In particular, there were

only three adventurers who held the SSS rank from the human race.

The receptionist held out a pure white card and told Hiiro that she wanted him to drip one drip of blood onto it. He prickled his finger with the needle he received.

After dripping blood onto the card, the card started to vanish.

“Huh? It’s gone?”

“Please recite 《Guild Card》 in your mind.”

When Hiiro did as he was told, the card reappeared in his hand.

But, the card that had reappeared in his hand was different from the card that he had seen disappear. What should have been a pure white card, now had a blue border and words on it.

“The colour represents your rank. From the lowest: blue • violet • green • yellow • orange • pink • red • silver • gold and finally black.”

He listened to the explanation while nodding his head. Then looking at his new Guild Card, he confirmed the information that was on it.

Name: Hiiro Okamura	Rank: F
Sex: Male	Equipment:
Age: 16	- Weapon:
Race: Human	- Guard:
From: Unknown	- Accessory:
Rigin: O	
Quest:	

Equipment meant his gear¹⁾. It was subdivided into Weapon, Guard and Accessory. He asked about the one thing that bothered him the most. Hiiro was glad that his birthplace was listed as unknown. If it was written that he was from another world, it would have been troublesome to have to explain the same thing over and over again.

“Hey, what’s this rigin thing written on the card...?”

“Mhm? That is the currency...?” The receptionists tilted her head and looked baffled. The people of this world naturally knew that rigin was currency.

On the other hand, it was also natural for Hiiro not to know this as he had just arrived in this world earlier today.

Upon inquiring further, he learnt that the value of rigin was almost the same as Japan’s yen. Lastly, 《Quest》 displayed his active requests.

(What a handy card.)

With a single card, he could trade and identify himself. Furthermore, the card usually resided within him and could be taken out at any time.

“How do I take up requests?”

“Please choose from the bulletin board over there. But since you are F rank. You can only receive requests one rank above you, E rank.”

“I see. How do I raise my rank?”

“When you carry out various requests, your experience points with the Guild will increase and your rank will naturally go up.”

“In short, after I complete various requests, this blue border will turn.... Erm, what was it again?”

“Violet.”

“So it’ll turn violet?”

Hiiro was astonished at how handy the card is.

“However, in order to be promoted onto SS rank or higher, you are required to gain approval from the guild. Please note that if you wish to be promoted to SS rank or higher, you are required to submit an application to the guild; if the application is accepted, your rank will raise.”

This meant that just by completing requests and levelling up, Hiiro would be able to

reach S rank naturally, but to rank up any further than that he would have to submit an application to the guild and take a test.

It wasn't as if Hiiro practically cared about being an SSS ranker.

"Well then, better not waste any time." He muttered while heading towards the bulletin board. Various requests written on paper were posted on the board.

Church Roof Repair. Rank F

Help repair the roof of the Amaruk Church. Experience preferred.

Reward: 10,000 Rigin

Lottery Herb Harvest. Rank F

Collect the Lottery Herbs that grow on Asbit Plateau.

Reward: 300 Rigin per bundle

Goblin Subjugation. Rank E

Kill 10 goblins in Creel Forest.

Reward: 35,000 Rigin

(Everything's been so easy to understand just like a game... Looking at the requests and seeing the word subjugation feels so surreal.)

There were various other requests, but without hesitation, Hiiro chose to do the 《Lottery Herb Harvest》. To be frank, since he was still at level one, he felt uneasy about doing the subjugation request.

Although, even beginners should be able to hunt down goblins. He decided that he would only do the subjugation request after gaining a few levels and getting accustomed to battling.

"Yes sir. Please keep in mind that if you cancel the request halfway, you will have to pay a cancellation fee of 10,000 rigin."

Hiiro accepted the quest by bringing the request note to the reception counter. Since there was a cancellation fee attached, he had to avoid cancelling quests by any means necessary. At least for now since he didn't have any money.

First, he asked where 【Asbit Plateau】 was. Luckily for him, it was just right outside of this town. He would be able to make a quick escape if worse came to worse.

The receptionist also showed him a picture of the 《Lottery Herb》 from the reference book that the guild kept.

(I would love to read that reference book thoroughly.)

His thirst for knowledge throbbed. The book-loving Hiiro was pretty tempted to hole himself up in a library for a while after he saved up some money.

After the receptionist had finished showing Hiiro the picture of the plant, he received a big bag. The bag was surely meant for his harvest.

On his way out of town, he brought up his 《Status》 and once again was bothered by 《Word Magic》 .

Even if he had a large amount of magic power, it was a waste if he didn't know how to use it. He needed to learn how to use magic as soon as possible.

He regretted a bit that he didn't ask the receptionist before. Magic wasn't an unusual thing in this world. Almost everyone had different amounts of magic power dwelling inside of them in this world and could use magic.

Speaking of which, he could just ask someone around here.

He suddenly stopped moving and looked to his right. There sat a person on a chair in front of a crystal ball which was placed on a desk.

‘...A fortune-teller?’

The person wore a black robe and hid their face under a hood, they certainly looked the part.

“Oh my? Would you like to try, sir?”

Listening to the voice, he concluded that it was quite an old woman.

“Nah, I don't have any money.”

“Oh, is that so. But good sir, you look like you have something you want to ask, do you not?”

“ ... ”

“You’re not from this country, are you? I’ve never seen you before.”

“What’s your point?” He stared at her with a bit of suspicion.

“Fuehehe. Don’t make such a scary face. How about I tell you a bit of your fortune to commemorate your first time here?”

“I’m not interested.”

“Fuehehe, don’t say that and take a seat.”

Since Hiiro wasn’t really in a rush, he did as the fortune-teller had told him to and sat in the chair facing her. Besides, he might be able to obtain some information that he needed from here on out.

“Fuehehe. Then let’s begin.”

The fortune-teller put her hands on top of the crystal ball and started concentrating. Hiiro silently watched her with his arms crossed. After a while, she spoke in a voice full of admiration.

“Hoh... You seem to have quite a peculiar star fate.”

“Peculiar?”

“Fuehehe. All people have stars dwelling within their hearts. The shape, colour, size and radiance varies between person to person. My divination technique allows me to see those stars. And while I have seen many stars from different people. I have never seen a star as powerful as yours before.”

“Mhm.”

“Yours is of a dark blue that rules over its surroundings as if suppressing a powerful, burning red and it shines in a light so dazzling, it could attract anyone’s attention. I

see... This country aside, you're not even from this world, are you now?"

The chair clattered as he quickly jolted up. (How did the fortune-teller know this?) Hiiro wondered to himself.

It hadn't been long since he'd left the castle. Hiiro started getting wary as he wasn't sure how a mere fortune-teller could possibly know the actions of the royal family.

(Can fortune-telling really allow you to know this? No, this is probably...magic?) Thinking that, he glared at her with a sharp look. While it didn't matter that she knew this fact, Hiiro put his guard up anyways.

"... Sit down. I am not thinking of revealing your secret. And while people from other worlds are indeed rare, it is not my first time meeting one."

"... Old lady, you've met one before?"

"Yes, just once when I was still young. That person back then also had a peculiar star like yours."

Hiiro couldn't tell if what she was saying was true or not. Fortune-tellers did have something that drew people towards them. So, Hiiro thought it wouldn't be bad to go along with her just for a little while longer and sat back down onto the chair.

"... I see. So then what's the result?"

"Fuhehe. Soon you will... No, you've already obtained a new set of wings. These wings will grow wide, strong and warm."

Hiiro didn't understand what she was talking about, but it seems like it wasn't anything ill. He thought he should at least listen till the very end.

"Many will likely gather towards your light in pursuit of these wings."

"Hmph that would be troublesome. I prefer being alone."

"Fuhehe. Well, this is but one possibility amongst the countless other possibilities. By hearing this today, this future has become more likely to occur. That's all."

“Mm ~ I don’t get it. I just do what I want to do.”

“Fuhehe. That’s fine. By the way, did you not have something you want to ask me?”

“Well, it’s just like you said, Old Lady. I come from a different world. In my world, there’s no such thing as magic, so I can’t grasp the magic here, nor do I know how to use it. I thought that I should learn how to use it as soon as possible.”

“Oho, I see. A world without magic, how interesting.”

There Hiiro suddenly realized that he had nothing else to lose and looked at the old woman.

“Hey, could you teach me how to use magic?”

“I don’t mind.”

He thought she was going to refuse but it seems that she was willing to teach him.

“Do you know where magic power comes from?”

“Nope.”

That’s why I’m asking, was what Hiiro wanted to say.

“Maybe from the heart or the brain?”

“No, no. Magic power comes from the blood.”

“Blood?”

“That’s right, every living being has blood. That’s the source of magic power.”

“Oh.”

“That’s why when you want to produce magic, you focus on the flow of your blood.”

“Focus on the blood flow?”

“Yes, watch closely.”

The fortune-teller showed Hiiro her opened palm. Something that looked like blue smoke gushed out from the centre of her palm. It gradually formed shape until there was a sphere in her hand.

“That’s magic.”

“... That’s awesome! So it’s something this visible?”

“Well, it takes a lot of training to make it this visible. I focused on my flow and imagined it gathering in my hand.”

“Imagined, huh...”

“Magic is the power of imagination and also the power of flow. Right now inside of this sphere, the flow of magic is circulating inside like blood.”

“That sounds a bit complicated but I get the gist of it. So in short, it wouldn’t be wrong to think that blood flow equals magic power, right?”

“Indeed.”

“And to utilize magic, I have to have an image of how blood flows throughout my body. If I do that...”

Hiiro imagined the flow of blood only going to his index finger. Then his fingertip glowed in a blueish-white light and slightly warmed up.

“So you can even do stuff like this. I see, so this is magic.”

Hiiro was excited upon successfully producing magic and his eyes began to shine. The fortune-teller who was in front of him had her mouth gaping open in surprise.

“Oh, what a surprise! You said that it’s your first time using magic, am I right?”

“Mm? Yeah.”

“Despite that, you can already control it. You must have an incredible imagination.”

“Well, I **am** a bookworm, so I have confidence in my imagination.”

Books only consisted of words and one had to imagine what the written text was saying in one's head.

In order to visualize in one's mind: the place, person and actions written in the narrative, one needed a good imagination.

Since he was very young, Hihiro had buried himself in books, so his imagination was well trained. It was the only thing that he was confident about boasting.

When he stopped picturing the image, the light and warmth disappeared from his fingertip.

"I appreciate it, Old Lady. Thanks to you I was able to understand what magic is."

"Fuhehe. I'm glad to hear."

"One more thing, when I want to use magic, do I just chant a spell while focusing on the flow of magic like just now?"

"That's correct. Look. 《Fire Ball》."

The fortune-teller held up her index finger and chanted then a fire ball around the same size as a tennis ball appeared.

"Ooohhhh."

Hihiro raised an excited voice in admiration, which was something he rarely did. His interest in magic was suddenly piqued by seeing it used for the first time.

"It's only this size for now, but it can become even bigger depending on your imagination and magic power."

"I see. But, I don't think I can use 《Fire Ball》."

"Mm. Is your attribute different?"

"Yeah, it's unattributed."

"... Now that's a rare attribute. Those with unattributed magic become unique

magicians without fail. Could it be that you..."

"Unique magician? Wait a second. Unique, it's that right...? A special kind of magic that only you can use."

Hihiro knew this from his knowledge of games and novels. It seems like this knowledge was spot on as the old woman nodded in confirmation.

There are eight standard attributes to magic: Fire • Water • Earth • Wind • Lightning • Ice • Light and Dark.

Unattributed magic did not fall into any of those categories. In other words, someone with unattributed magic could not cast any magic from the other attributes.

In exchange, the magic that they could use was specially tailored to them and was called unique magic; the one who handles that unique magic was called a unique magician.

"By the way, unique magic is a valuable thing in this world. However, there aren't many people who could control it."

"What do you mean?"

"Unique magic is always powerful and I have heard that it is difficult to control. Thus, most people's magic backfires and they lose their lives to 《Rebound》."

That story sent shivers down Hihiro's spine. He had never thought that unique magic would be that dangerous.

"Control is important but knowledge even more so."

"Knowledge?"

"Yes, because people who could not fully grasp their own magic suffer from 《Rebound Death》. When you become familiar with the knowledge of your magic power, your magic and yourself, you can become a first-class magician."

"I see. Old Lady, thanks for telling me all this."

“Fuhehe. Not at all. It was a pleasure to meet one with a light like yours after so long.”

Hiiro still couldn't see the old woman's face but from the sound of her voice, she must have been smiling.

“I am always here, so drop by if you need anything. But of course, I will have to charge you next time.”

“How shrewd.” Then he parted with the fortune-teller and headed for the town gate.

(I'm sure 【Asobit Plateau】 is just east from here.)

Hiiro started walking towards the plateau while retaining a mental image of the 《Lottery Herb》 he was shown. After walking for a while, he found it rather easily. It looked exactly like the picture he saw in the reference book.

It had something similar to a small white bud on its tip and was growing all around the area Hiiro was in.

‘This quest is much simpler than I expected.’

It was close to the city and wasn't all that difficult to find as it grew in abundance around this area. It was such an easy task and even beginners could enjoy it.

(There's no one around here.)

He double checked the surrounding area to make sure that no one was there and then recited 《Status》 .

Hiiro looked at the column where 《Word Magic》 was written and lightly touched it with his finger. As soon as he touched it, the panel changed and showed an explanation about 《Word Magic》 .

(So help does show up after all if I click on something. This is really just like a game.)

Hiiro didn't want to just read the help explanation, he also wanted to try the magic here.

If possible, he didn't want anyone to see him use his unique magic.

He feared that it would make him stand out and lead to being summoned by the King. It was fine for him to ignore the King's summons but it was a pain to stand out.

(Well, that depends on what kind of magic is it though.)

If all unique magic was indeed powerful, it was quite possible for his fear to come true.

Besides like the old woman had told him earlier, it was necessary for him to understand magic in order to understand himself.

Since there was something known as 《Rebound》 in this world, Hiroyuki didn't intend to be reckless with his magic. He didn't want to die, he only wanted to know what his magic was.

《Word Magic》

MP Cost: 30

Imagine magic power gathering in your finger and draw a word. An effect in accordance with the meaning of the word is brought forth. It is a unique magic with phenomenal power to apprehend and contort the underlying principles. This magic was once ?%&GR!&*...

Still Hiroyuki wouldn't know if he was right or not unless he tried it out. By the way, 《Single Chain Release》 signifies the possible number of characters that can be written. For some reason the last part was corrupted and unreadable. He was quite bothered by this but he somewhat understood this magic.

(《Word Magic》 ...I guess I'll give it a try.)

With that in mind, he took a deep breath and just like he had done when he was with the fortune-teller, he concentrated his magic power onto his fingertips. It took him awhile to accomplish this before but on his second try, his fingertip lit up with magic power rather smoothly.

(A character, huh... Will anything do? But since it's using my imagination to manifest the word...)

While thinking that he drew on the ground. Then after he finished tracing the character on the ground it glowed a blueish-white light. He had written the character for 『Hard 硬』 and imagined the ground hardening. It was easier to imagine things with kanji.

Then he muttered “ 《Word Magic》 , activate”. In that moment, the magic power in the word flowed into the ground while sparking and zapping like an electrical discharge.

(Did that do it...?)

Hiiro knocked on the ground. It was hard. Incredibly hard. However moments ago, without a doubt, the ground had been soft.

“Whoa!” He unexpectedly said in an impressed voice. He walked around the area to check the range of the effect.

Clonk clonk clonk...thud

The hardened ground in the area was roughly 6.5m²¹¹⁾ wide. No matter how long Hiiro waited, the ground didn't return to its original state.

The glowing characters had vanished. It was quite convenient that it left no traces behind since it lowered the likelihood of his magic getting exposed. Hiiro wrote 『Origin 元』 on the ground to check whether or not it would revert back.

Once again it activated like an electrical charge and the ground returned to its original state. The meaning of the characters were accurately produced.

‘This is... More of a cheat than I thought.’

Hiiro realized how terrifying his magic was. A magic to apprehend and contort the underlying principles meant that he could affect everything around him with just one character.

For example, if he wrote the character 『Wither 枯』 on the 《Lottery Herbs》 , then they would wither. If he wrote the character 『Split 割』 onto the rock, then it would break into two.

(It was, undoubtedly, possible to change all kinds of phenomenon... And...)

With that in mind, he once again concentrated magic power into his finger and wrote another character on the ground.

Then suddenly a flame busted out from the ground and scorched the grassland. The character that Hiiro had written was 『Flame 炎』. But this time, the flame was extinguished in a minute.

(Creating something from nothing... Looks like I got my hands on some incredible magic.)

He sighed in awe realizing that unique magic held far greater power than he had imagined.

Still he was happy about the usefulness of his magic. He should be able to live in this world without any problems. Having omnipotent magic will surely come in handy.

(This magic still contains many mysteries and the corrupted text doesn't help. Moreover, using this kind of magic probably came with many risks.)

The reason he thought that was because his body felt heavy. For some reason, he felt mentally exhausted so he recited 《Status》 to check.

(I knew it, it costs quite a bit of MP.)

His MP ought to be 120 when it was full and now it was down to 30. He had used word magic three times. He couldn't compare it to other magic but the consumption rate was most likely quite high. Hiiro's MP was higher compared to other people; this seems to be a benefit of being from another world.

A three-digit MP number was unthinkable for a normal level one. It should usually be around the same amount as HP and the consumption for magic that beginners could use should correspond with that.

In all the games that he had played so far, there had never been a spell that would cost 30 MP right from the beginning. It was a fact that the strength of magic and likewise its MP cost, increased as one raised their level.

(I can only use it four times with my current max MP. I've got to level up quickly.)

After all, the number of time one can use their magic was already determined. Even more so for omnipotent magic like 《Word Magic》.

(Since I've got magic down, it's time to bring this stuff back.)

Hiiro returned to town with the bag filled with 《Lottery Herb》.

In games, it would be common to get attacked by nearby monsters, but lucky for him, he reached town without any incidents. Hiiro felt that this was definitely reality.

He headed to the Guild to report his completed quest.

"Allow me to verify the details of your request, Hiiro Okamura-sama. You accepted the F rank quest, 《Lottery Herb Harvest》. Please show me your loot."

Hiiro place the 《Lottery Herb》 onto a big scale like he was told to by the receptionist.

"... Okay, that makes 22 bundles. Your rewards comes to 7,700 rigin. Please present your guild card."

When he handed the card over to her, she took it and left for somewhere. After a while she came back and returned his card.

Hiiro looked at the currency column of the card, the earlier value of 0 had turned into 7,700.

"The quest has now been completed. Thank you for your hard work."

She bowed her head politely and showed him a professional smile like always. He gave her a small nod and left the Guild.

(Well then, I finally have money. Guess I'll go eat. I still haven't eaten anything since coming here.)

Asking the villagers, he went to look for a restaurant. 【Victorias】 was established as a large citadel and was divided into four districts: commercial, craft, entertainment and residential. Many people lived in this large town. Each district was rather large

and was structured as if many towns had been merged together.

Hihiro headed towards the commercial district to look for a restaurant and entered one that he had found on the way. It seems that this restaurant served delicious fish cuisines. Since he liked to eat fish, he decided to stay and checked out the menu.

But as expected, all the dish names meant nothing to him. He ordered the dish of the day since he had no clue what the other dishes were. The meal was also reasonably priced.

“Ok~ay, one serving of 『Addictive Seafood Noodles』 . Please wait a moment!” The waitress cheerfully took his order. While waiting for the food, he checked his 《Status》 .

There he noticed that his MP had recovered to 40 after being sunk down to 30 from using 《Word Magic》 three times.

It most likely recovered over time when he rested, just like HP. It had been an over an hour since he had used magic and it had only recovered by 10 MP, so he couldn't say that the recovery rate was particularly good.

(Well, rather than resting, all I did was walk around town without using MP.)

If he had rested in the true sense of the word, the recovery amount would be different. As he pondered over it, his steamy food was served.

The bowl was filled with different types of seafood: there was a large quantity of things that resembled salmon roe, shrimp, kelp and seaweed. Hihiro took his chopsticks and stirred it into the bowl.

By doing so, an exquisite aroma of seafood tickled his nasal cavities and his stomach began to growl as to demand the food at once. He bit into something exotic like shark fin.

“Whoa!” He couldn't hold back his voice. The fin was steeped with flavour and spread throughout his mouth. It tasted so good that he couldn't help but crave for more.

Then he picked up the spoon to taste the soup. It was good enough to be served as a

separate dish on the menu.

The broth of the seafood was so addicting that if he wasn't careful, he would gulp it all down in one go. It was such a perfect dish.

Next, Hiiro tried the noodles. On a closer, he could see something that looked like small grains needed into the noodles. With just a bite, his taste buds were assaulted with the taste of the sea.

There was mashed fish kneaded into the noodles. This was truly seafood noodles.

(Now I see. Adding addictive to the name of this this dish wasn't just for show.)

He finished his meal in a matter of minutes and could go for another round or two but he resisted the temptation because he was tight on money. Still 450 Rigin was quite cheap for the meal.

Hiiro's body somehow felt lighter. It appears that MP also recovered after eating food and the same goes for HP.

(Indeed, delicious food is justice.)

He let the satisfied feeling linger for a bit before heading out to look for an inn. Starting from tomorrow, Hiiro planned to focus on acquiring money and levelling up for a while.

The next day, Hiiro woke up early and headed to the Guild. When he got there, he picked out a request.

<p>Goblin Subjugation. Rank E Kill 10 goblins in Creel Forest. Reward: 35,000 Rigin</p>

He had already checked out this request yesterday, it was reasonable for beginners and also yielded quite the reward.

Originally, he had thought of levelling up first before doing this quest but decided that he could level up en route. He also wanted to test his magic more.

Receptionist: “Goblins are the weakest monsters but they attack in groups, so please be careful.”

“Okay.” He answered bluntly to the receptionist and left the guild. Hiiro had wanted to leave town right away but he had things to buy, so he headed towards the commercial district.

He visited the weapons shop and brought himself a solid knife as it was reasonably priced. Hiiro brooded over what to do about armour. He considered getting a shield but he speculated that should something happen, he could just use 《Word Magic》.

Hiiro left the town and headed west to 【Creel Forest】. He could reach the forest by following a straight path called the 【Toll Road】.

During his search for an inn yesterday, he had stopped by a general store and brought five 《Crispy Beans》 for HP Recovery, three 《Honey Toffee》 for MP Recovery along with a map of this world.

Even if they were considered necessary expenses, the knife had been more expensive than Hiiro had expected and his purchases had completely emptied out his wallet.

He had to complete this request by all means or he would have to camp outside tonight. Camping outside sounded fun but he wanted to avoid suddenly having a hobo lifestyle.

On the way to his destination, he spotted something strange in front of him.

(What’s that...?)

The thing that was blocking his path was as big as a volleyball and light blue. However it didn’t have a fixed shape and looked squishy and winding.

(Wait, could it be...?)

The famous monster for levelling up as a beginner in RPG games...

“A slime!” Hiiro’s voice somewhat filled with excitement. Then the slime who was startled by his voice, charged at him.

“Oi oi, a battle out of nowhere?!”

He drew his solid knife from the scabbard. The slime was slow but Hiiro got chills when he thought about getting hit by such a disgusting substance.

He swung his knife down at the slime the moment it jumped up. *Slash* There was no resistance and the slime was cut in half but the two parts still moved windingly. It was clearly disgusting.

“Don’t tell me it multiplied by being cut in half.”

In that case, a blade would be useless, as he was pondering over what to do, the monster writhed painfully on the ground and stopped moving before long.

Hiiro timidly poked it with his knife. It’s not moving...

(Wait, there’s faster way to do this!)

He opened his 《Status》. The NEXT (required experience points until level up) column had been 10 but now it turned into 8.

The fact that he had received experiences points meant that the monster was defeated.

“Oh ~. It’s a monster after all. I bet it’s a weak one like the goblin since it only gave out 2 EXP.”

The feeling of winning his first battle was somewhat satisfying. He had thought that if he killed something his heart would ache but surprisingly he was fine.

(... Still feels like a game... Or rather, it feels like someone else is doing this and not him.)

While Hiiro was calmly analysing, he heard another rustling sound from behind. He turned around and there were more slimes; three this time.

“This is ideal for levelling up. But I wished there were four of them.”

Then he could have levelled up. He clicked his tongue and three more slimes appeared from behind him as if to mock him. Hiiro was completely surrounded.

“Oi, oi, a pincer attack on a beginner?”

While he grumbled bitterly, he focused on defeating the three slimes in front of him first. After he cut down the first and second one, a smacking impact hit his back.

It seems that a slime had charge attacked him.

“Damn it... It surprisingly hurts...”

It felt as if he had just been hit by someone. He distanced himself a little and checked his 《Status》 and saw that his HP had decreased by 3.

“This isn’t the time for me to be foolishly play around.”

Bracing himself once more, he took a stance with his knife. Two slimes attacked him simultaneously, he dodged them and cut one down immediately. But two more were coming from behind.

“Spare me the pain!”

By swinging his knife around, he managed to cut down two slimes at once. There was just one more slime left. Hihiro killed it by plunging himself at it.

Then inside his head, he heard a *pipipinnng* sound and he opened 《Status》.

He thought that it might have been the sound of him levelling up and it turned out that he was right. He was now level 2.

“Figures. The sound from before was for levelling up. Anyway, the rate at which my MP increases is amazing. It had increased by 25 in just one level. Well, it’s not like I’m complaining.”

However, Hihiro was curious about how the standard levelling up system in this world worked.

According to the King’s explanation, it seems that the 《Status》 system was made by the God who created this world.

“The King said he didn’t really understand it very well. I don’t even know if the

existence called God really exists. Ah well, it's not like it really matters right now anyways.'

He defeated all the slimes that showed up on his way to 【Creel Forest】 .

He made it to the 【Creel Forest】 safely but he had no clue where the goblins were. As slimes had appeared various times, he was now level 3.

With no other ideas, he advanced into the forest with precaution and left marks on the trees as not to lose his way. He would use them as landmarks on his way back.

He heard a rustling sound coming from the thicket and took stance, thinking it was a goblin but it was just another slime.

"Another one of you."

Since he was already familiar with slimes, he killed it instantly while thinking that he was already sick of seeing them. The content of his request required him to kill ten goblins and as proof, he had to bring back 《Goblin's Teeth》 .

Incidentally, the proof for slime subjugation was 《Slime Substance》 but he ignored it because he didn't want to touch something so disgusting.

He progressed further into the forest and more slimes appeared. The moment that he started feeling irritated about it, something appeared from the side thicket and attacked him with some kind of weapon.

Whoosh

He dodged it by bending his body, but he broke out in cold sweat as he heard the sound that quivered through the air.

(Whoa, that was a close call... I see so that's a goblin, huh.)

Its appearance was identically to the illustration shown in the reference book he was shown. It had a small stature like a child but an ugly face and it held a rugged club in its hand.

(Must hurt to get hit by that...)

When he glared at the goblin, he received an impact from behind and groaned. He had completely forgotten about the slime. The goblin used this chance to close up the gap between them.

(Damn! Goblins come in groups' right, I can't waste time here!)

He parried the club with his solid knife. The goblin let out a voice that sounded as if it was grinding its teeth and drool was spilling out of its mouth. Hiroy definitely didn't want to get bitten and sent the goblin flying with a kick.

(Hmmm, a humanoid monster... Will I be able to kill it...?) He asked himself, narrowed his eyes and stared at the goblin. Needless to say, he had never killed anyone when he lived in Japan; he had killed bugs but never animals.

So even if it was a monster, he was worried about whether or not he was able to kill a living creature who had a human appearance.

"... Haa, well I do plan to live here." He said as if to convince himself and glared at the goblin.

"Sorry... Become my stepping stone."

He rushed to the goblin with all his might. Hiroy didn't know why but for some reason his agility was high. The goblin didn't move as it intended to take him on upfront.

Slaaaaash!

He chopped off the goblin's head. He felt nauseated by the odour and blood that followed but he swallowed it down and glared at the dead goblin.

"Damn! You're next!"

Afterwards he also defeated the slime, at that moment the level up sound resounded in his head. His level was now 4. It was going well.

His joy only lasted for a brief second as one by one goblins started to appear in front of him. The earlier battle seemed to have attracted them.

Hihiro had been waiting for them. He concentrated his magic power into his fingertip and quickly wrote a character onto the ground. The groups of goblins came at him all at once.

“Good... Come here!”

The moment that the goblins came into his field of view, “《Word Magic》 activate!” He shouted and an electrical discharge sprung from the character. In that moment, several sharp objects appeared from the ground and pierced the goblins.

“Heh, it worked.”

The goblins couldn’t move even though they desperately tried while grinding their teeth in pain. After a while they stopped moving as they died.

The character that Hihiro had written was 『Needle 針』. Its area of effect was roughly 6.5m^2 wide, just like the time he had used the character 『Hard 硬』. He had waited for the goblins to enter that area before activating his magic. Then the ground sprouted needles just like a cactus and killed all the goblins on it.

(Damn... This is more draining than I thought.)

Lots of blood was flowing out from the pierced spots on the goblin’s body. Seeing all the blood, Hihiro painfully became aware that this was a real battle. He had done that and if he was careless, he could end up in the same state. It was taught to him in this forceful manner.

(Fuuuh, anyways, first things first)

Hihiro couldn’t die in this kind of place and he didn’t want to run away either. He took action immediately. There were still goblins around but confused by his weird attack, they were reluctant to attack him.

“Now then, time to try the next one.”

While saying that, he picked up a stone and wrote the character for 『Stop 止』 onto it. If this worked, the goblins will stop moving.

He aimed the stone and threw it at a goblin. The moment the goblin was hit on the shoulder, he activated it.

“Stop! 《Word Magic》.” He said aloud. With this he confirmed that he didn’t need to recite the words in his mind in order for it to activate.

Since saying the words aloud created a kind of romantic atmosphere^{IV}), he didn’t feel embarrassed at all.

However only the stone stopped. The stone had frozen in midair as if its time had stopped.

(I see, so you can’t emit magic.)

Since he had written on the stone, only the stone was influenced.

Hiiro had hoped that the effect written on the stone would also affect the goblin too but sadly that wasn’t the case. Only the stone itself was affected, leaving the goblin unaffected.

“Okay, onto the next!”



This time he wrote 『Extend 伸』 on the blade of his knife. Then he readied the knife and turned his body like a spinning top.

“Extend! 《Word Magic》!”

Whooooosh

In an instant, the blade extended manifold and the goblins in the distant was cut. Three of them went down at once. As far as he could tell there were only three left.

“I only need two more for my quest, but I won’t let anyone escape!”

He slaughtered the goblins by swinging his extended knife around and was so immersed in it that he didn’t notice the level up sound ring at all.

After he had defeated all of them, he collected the 《Goblin Teeth》. He only needed the sharp black tooth located in the goblin’s upper jaw. Before he started on his task, he transformed his knife back by writing 『Origin 元』 on it.

His body was suddenly felt exhausted as soon as he had finished collecting the teeth. His MP was empty too so he ate 《Honey Toffee》 to restore it. The toffee was slightly sweet and his body felt lighter.

(Oh yeah, I have to fix the ground too.)

With his MP replenished, he fixed the ground by writing 『Origin 元』 on it and just like he thought, the ground returned to normal.

“Hmph, never thought I was so sensitive.”

He was emotionally worn out, it had been awhile since he’d moved so much and although they were monsters, he had basically massacred them.

The smell of the blood, the sensation of cutting through flesh, the dying screams and the corpses; all of that gave Hiro, who grew up in a peaceful country, a tremendous shock.

He became painfully aware that this was in fact reality and not a game.

Feeling more exhausted than he had expected, he sat down on the spot to rest. But a rustling sound announced the arrival of something. It was a goblin.

“Aah~, I see. I’ll just have to keep doing this until I get used to it...”

He made a resigning sigh and glared at the goblin.

“Now bring it! Come at me until I get used to it!”

He swung his knife around somewhat in frustration.

“Aah~ I’m pooped~.”

On his way back to town, he had found a bench so he sat down and took a rest. The slimes and goblins had attacked him without rest.

The blood of the monsters he had defeated was spurted all over him. Thanks to that, he got completely used to it but he was completely out of fuel right now.

(Well, thanks to that my level rose up quite a bit.)

He planned to go to report to the Guild after resting for a little while longer. His blood spattered appearance drew a lot of attention from people but he was too tired to care.

(Haa... What dirty clothes... I wonder if I can clean it with my magic.) With that in mind, he moved somewhere without people and wrote 『Clean 清』 and when he activated it, the bloody clothes became all clean again in the blink of an eye.

Blueish-white light rained down on his body and shone brightly like scattering jewels.

(When I write it on my body, I won’t need to take a bath...?)

Hihiro kept it in mind to try it out later and if it worked, he would be delighted at how convenient his magic was.

By the way, there is a bathing culture in this world as well. Unlike Japanese people who thought that bathing was normal, commoners of this world cleaned their bodies by boiling water, soaking a wet towel into it and then wiping their bodies. Of course, aristocrats have big luxurious bathtubs in their mansions that they used every day.

At the guild the receptionist widened her eyes in surprise. Because he had complete the quest, which demanded the subjugation of ten goblins with a far higher number, 22.

She looked at the 22 《Goblin Teeth》 that he had presented as proof.

“I-I am impressed that you managed to hunt so many goblins! Especially since you’ve only recently registered here, Okamura-sama.”

“Please hurry up and evaluate them already.”

He wanted to finish this up before he was dragged into something troublesome. Hearing his words, the receptionist started to apologise and went to properly do her job.

“The advertised reward is 35,000 rigin, but I can give you an extra 10,000 rigin for all these extra 《Goblin Teeth》 you are turning in. What would you like to do?”

“Yeah, do that.”

“Then, please wait a moment.”

She took this card and went off somewhere after saying that. After a while she returned and gave him back his card.

The money had been added to it. He recited the card to disappear, upon which it vanished into his chest.

Now he had enough funds to stay in the inn for a while and also to buy a considerable amount of MP restoration pills. While doing the subjugation quest, he had realized that MP pills were absolute necessities for him.

In order to use 《Word Magic》, which had a high MP consumption rate numerous times, he should always have a large amount of restoration pills on hand.

Unlike HP, MP could not be recovered by 《Word Magic》. As expected, there are limitations to his infinite cheat power.

(I got to test out a lot of stuff this time and because of that, realized how important MP

pills are. I'd better buy as much as I can carry.)

Thus, he headed straight towards to general store and brought items that were necessary for battle, including a weapon. It was the cheapest sword available but it still cost him 30,000 rigin.

The reason he brought a new one was because the blade of his knife was chipped. Which was only natural since he had fought so many monsters. Lastly, he brought a red hooded-robe as protective gear.

He chose it since it had high magic resistance and an unexpectedly high defence value. The robe was kind of flashy, like something a knight would wear but he made do with it thinking that he would get used to it eventually.

(Ahh, couldn't I have fixed the chip in the blade with magic... Like if I wrote 『New 新』 or 『Origin 元』 on it while remembering the condition it was in when I brought it... And...)

Various ideas came into his mind but he had already brought the sword.

(Well, it was just a knife anyway. I'll use magic from now on.)

The knife was only something Hihiro brought due to a shortage of funds at the beginning and he had intended to buy a sword when he had saved up enough money anyways. From now on he would first try to restore the blade before buying a new one.

And when the blade actually got chipped, he tried using 《Word Magic》 to repair it. The blade really turned out as good as new with the word 『New 新』. It seems that his magic knew no bounds.

The following week after that, Hihiro complete quests from morning till evening. At first he just wanted to save up money and level up but it was surprisingly fun when he tried it.

He saw plants that he had never seen before and encountered various types of monsters. It was also quite worthwhile to think of different ways to defeat monsters.

He didn't consider himself to be a battle maniac but it seems that it was necessary for

him to revise that as he unintentionally got elated about how to kill a strong opponent – the real thrill of an RPG.

By doing various quests, his Guild rank also rose, turning from the blue F rank into the violet E rank. Not to mention his pile of money and his increase in levels.

The receptionist and others called him a new rising star since there were hardly any beginners who could complete twenty to thirty quests in one week.

(If I work here any longer, it'll probably get troublesome when the King hears about it.)

Hiroyuki feared that he would get told to fight alongside the heroes if the King knew he was that strong, which would be terrible.

His freedom was the only thing he didn't want to give up. He didn't want his fun life in another world to be restrained by obligations.

(I guess it's about time.) He made up his mind while checking the contents of his big bag.

(I'll leave this country tomorrow.) Yes, his decision was to leave this country and travel.

He had made enough money, his level had already risen to 18 and the most important thing of all was that he had toughened up his mentality; with that, he concluded that he could survive while travelling.

CHAPTER 2

DEPARTURE

The next day, Hiroy Okamura groaned while spreading out his map on the 【Toll Highway】 outside of town. He was deciding where to head off to next.

He had an idea of where he wanted to go. If he went south, he would reach a large town called 【Frentor】. Albeit not as big as 【Victorias】, it seems to be a famous commerce town.

But Hiroy would rather head to the west to a town called 【Surge】. 【Surge】 was close to the country's border. The continent where the 『Beastman』 lived was just beyond that border.

Since he came from a different world, it was only natural that he wanted to meet 『Beastman』 such as, 『Wolf-kin』 and 『Cat-kin』.

Right now, there was tension between both countries [humans and beastman]. He didn't think that crossing the border would be easy. However he heard a story like this as an adventurer.

He had heard that, although the two countries had placed restrictions on each other, there were still a lot of 『Beastman』 adventurers. They would often do jobs together with adventurers from the 『Human Race』.

It was as he had thought, an individual's mind-set and the nation's mind-set were different things. That is to say, the nation's view of things did not necessarily represent the views of the people. There were still people who worked together regardless of race.

There were, however, still a lot of people in this world who detested other races. Hiroy didn't hear anything good about the war waging 『Demon-kin』.

Even so, Hiroy believed that he had to confirm it with his own eyes. In the first place, he wasn't interested in the opinion of others. Hiroy came up with his own conclusions

based on what he had experienced, he prided himself on that.

Therefore he decided to head to 【Surge】 . If necessary, he would think of ways to cross the country border.

There was quite a long distance till 【Surge】 . He prepared himself for a splendid journey and began walking. 【Greel Forest】 which he had been to before, was on the way to 【Surge】 .

Hiiro needed to pass through the forest but there was no longer any need to be wary of it. Hiiro entered the forest and flawlessly defeated the monsters that attacked him.

He easily passed through the forest and got onto 【Timber's Highway】 , following it straight led to a small village called 【Ames】 . His plan was to stay there for the night and head off again tomorrow.

Hiiro immediately went to look for an inn in 【Ames】 . Luckily for him not many people travelled here so the inn was vacant, only two rooms were booked.

“One room, please.”

“Oh, ah, yes. Ex-excuse me... Are you... An adventurer?”

“Yes?”

“I... See.”

“...?”

Hiiro had a feeling that he wasn't welcomed and tilted his head. It was his first time in this village and he hadn't done anything untoward. Yet the innkeeper had seemed anxious. It bothered him but for now he reserved his room and went to look around the village.

Hiiro noticed something strange as he walked around town. For some reason he felt gazes on him from all directions. He felt as if he was an uninvited guest in this village.

Just like the time at the inn, the people were looking at him unpleasantly. Maybe this village didn't welcome outsiders.

"Hey you." A voice called out from behind him. When he turned around there was a child standing there. It was a boy around the age of seven. The boy glared suspiciously at Hiiro. Hiiro ignored the boy because he didn't like his attitude.

"Hey, don't ignore me!" The boy got angry.

(Why do I have to deal with this brat?) Hiiro thought as he let out a big sigh.

"What's up, Brat?"

"Don't call me a brat! Not when you're wearing some weird red robe yourself! It's intimidating!"

"Are you a bull or what?"

It wasn't like Hiiro was wearing the red robe to be intimidating, he simply wore it because it was an excellent piece of protective gear. Although he grew attached to it after wearing it all the time. Hiiro wore his black gakuran underneath the red robe, it was an odd combination but he didn't care.

"You're an adventurer, right? What're you doing in a place like this?"

"A place like this?"

"Don't call it a place like this!"

"You called it that."

Hiiro couldn't come up with an answer as to why the boy was questioning him so aggressively, so he ignored the boy and walked away since it was too troublesome.

"Hey, wait!"

Ignore, ignore.

"I told you to wait!"

Ignore, ignore.

“Hey! Listen to me!”

Ignore, ignore.

“Hey... Please... Don’t ignore me.” The boy’s voice started to tremble. He must have got sad from being ignored. Hiiro made a light sigh and stopped walking.

“What do you want?”

Hiiro determined that it would be difficult for him to stay in the village if the boy started crying here so he stopped ignoring him. The boy smiled energetically when Hiiro stopped ignoring him but went back to glaring at Hiiro right away.

“Sh-sheesh, you’re such a meanie! Adventurers are all like that!”

“I am who I am. Don’t lump me in with the others. It’s unpleasant.” When Hiiro glared at the boy harshly, the boy flinched. If other people saw this, it would look as if Hiiro was bullying the little boy.

“... Hah, so what do you want? I’m busy looking around the village.”

“Eh? Why are you looking around the village?”

“Why does it matter? It’s got nothing to do with you, Brat.”

“Ug... Urggg...”

The boy began to tear up again, so Hiiro pressed on his temples and kept him company.

“Hah, I’m just killing time. I just got to this village. I’m in the middle of my journey so I plan to stay here for the night.”

“Oh? You’re not going to scam this village?”

“Scam? Say what?”

According to the boy, some adventurers recently stopped by this village barged into the general and weapon store and forcefully haggled products, doing whatever they

wanted.

“It’s was a pair of two adventurers and they falsely charged the inn so that they can stay there for free.”

“Why didn’t you refuse? You could’ve chased them out with all the villagers.”

“We can’t do that!”

It wasn’t the boy who replied to Hiiro.

“Ah, Uncle Panis! And Coco.”

The man named Panis looked like he was in his late 30s. In reality he might be younger but his gloomy expression made him look older. Next to Panis was a cute little girl around the same age as the cheeky child.

“Argh! Why are you getting involved?!”

Hiiro bulged out his cheeks and raised his eye. While watching the kids quarrel, he quickly glanced at the man named Panis.

“And you are?”

Panis: “You’re an adventurer, right? I’m Panis. I run a humble shop.”

That meant that he was a victim of the two adventurers.

“Is what the Brat said true?”

Panis: “Yes, it is. They’re currently rummaging around in the general store.”

“... You said you can’t chase them out? What do you mean?”

Panis: “They’ve somehow got a hold of the village’s title deed.”

“Huh? How did they get their hands on that? Doesn’t the village chief usually keep it?”

Panis: “Yes, but the title deed suddenly disappeared from the village chief’s house...”

In other words, the two adventurers stole it.

“How careless. You reap what you sow.”

“Haha, you got us there.”

Once again, another new person responded to Hiiro.

“You are the traveller who just arrived earlier? I am the village chief of 【Ames】 , Brye.”

“What are you doing here, Chief?” Panis asked.

Brye: “Same reason as you. I was informed that an adventurer had arrived. So, I came to check it out.”

It seems that Hiiro’s arrival in this village was immediately reported to the village chief and he came to see the adventure who had suddenly visited with his own eyes. He looked relieved to see that Hiiro was just an ordinary adventurer.

CRAACK!

Suddenly the sound of wood breaking echoed. Everyone present faced the origin of the sound in shock. The door of a house was broken open as someone was thrown out.

“Mick!” The village chief widened his eyes and shouted. The man called Mick was thrown to the ground and was cowering. Two people appeared from the house where he was thrown out from.

One of the men was fat and had a bald head, the other man was slender with a spiky hairstyle like a broom. Spiky head spat while looking down on Mick.

“Hmph! Try saying that again!” The slender man also qualified to be called spiky beanpole, scowled fiendishly. Next to him, the other guy took a bite out of a piece of fruit that was probably from the store. Hiiro named him bald chubby.

“Eek! This is also a business! I-if you take more than that...!” Mick desperately pleaded while lowering his head. They most likely told Mick to hand over the products for free and he refused.

An irritated vein popped up on spiky beanpole's forehead and he kicked Mick's face.

Quite a lot of blood squirted from Mick's wound. Seeing the blood, the village chief rushed over to Mick. Spiky beanpole glared sharply at the village chief.

Spiky: "Huuh? Look what we have here, it's the chief. Got something to say? Mm?"

Hihiro calmly observed, the spiky beanpole acted like a third-rate gangster, no, delinquent^V).

"Oi, oi, I wanna eat more." Bald chubby went back into the house while drooling, probably in search for more food.

Spiky: "Hey lil' bro, give it a rest, we're leaving."

Bald: "Oi, oi, I'm hungry."

Spiky: "Tsk. Make it quick."

Bald: "Okay."

"Stop it already!" The village chief shouted, unable to take it anymore, but flinched when spiky beanpole glared at him. Scared by spiky beanpole's blood thirst, the other villagers didn't approach either.

(It looks like the title dead is not the only reason they're compelled to accept this situation, the villagers were no match for those guys.)

The village didn't have any capable people and if they were to challenge those two they'd only get killed, therefore they couldn't resist.

(They could ask the army for help, but I guess those guys would just run away with the title deed. There's also a chance that those two would come back to seek revenge. The best situation would be for someone to subdue them.) While Hihiro was thinking, the boy next to him looked up at Hihiro almost as if to plead him to do something.

"I don't know what you want, but this doesn't have anything to do with me."

"Wah! And you call yourself a human?"

“Stop it, Nies!” The girl named Coco called the boy Nies. This was when Hiiro heard Nies’s name for the first time.

“What? Do I look like a monster or something?”

“You do! Why aren’t you helping!? As a fellow adventurer, you have to stop them!” Hearing Nies’s words Coco also started to restlessly stare at Hiiro. Even though she had told Nies to stop, her eyes showed that she was also expecting Hiiro to help out.

“... Listen, brat, I may be an adventurer, but I’m no champion of justice. You should go ask a hero if you want justice for free.” Hiiro said composed while crossing his arms. Nies gave him a look filled with anger but it was no concern of his.

Nies: “W-why do you have to say it like that!? Isn’t it fine if you just help us out?”

“I refuse. If you want me to work for you, you can pay me a reasonable compensation right?”

“Co-compensation? What’s with that! Argh, forget it! In the end all adventurers are like this!” Nies said and went straight towards the two guys.

Coco: “Nies! Where are you going!?”

Panis: “Hey Nies! You can’t go there!”

Coco shouted, Panis also tried to stop him but Nies ran with all his might. Panis then scowled at Hiiro while grinding his teeth, but Panis soon relaxed and sighed.

Panis: “No, I get it. This has nothing to do with you. Heroes that work for people without charge like those from fairy tales don’t exist.”

“Well, I don’t know if such people exist but I’m not like that. I’ll pass on working for free.”

This was not a common hero story. Battling involved many dangers, there was no way that Hiiro would fight for free knowing that.

“On-onii-chan... You won’t help us?” Coco pleaded while looking up at Hiiro but Hiiro kept silent. Her eyes slowly started to water, as expected, it was difficult for Hiiro to

face that so he closed his eyes while crossing his arms.

Coco looked up at Hiiro and cries a little more, “Uuaahh...”

“... For free.”

Panis: “... Huh? What?”

Panis suddenly raised his voice and replied to Hiiro. “So it just... Has to be paid?”

Hiiro got a bad feeling.

Panis: “If you help us, I’ll give you the finest weapon in my shop.”

“ ... ”

Panis: “Will you help us?”

“ ... ”

Panis looked at Hiiro earnestly. It was a pain and it honestly didn’t concern Hiiro at all. Hiiro was interested in the finest weapon at Panis’s shop, but he didn’t particularly want it.

“I, I’ll also give you handmade sweets! So...” Coco ended her sentence with that one words and her eyes started to get watery. Hiiro quickly glanced at her and turned to meet Panis’s eyes.

Hiiro stared at Panis without averting his gaze and they stared at each other for a while. Soon after, Hiiro sighed at Panis’s persistence.

“... Are there any delicious foods or rare books in this village? If there is, I would prefer those over the weapon.”

Panis: “Huh? Food or books...?”

Panis: “There is a strange book...”

Panis frowned and Coco tilted her head cutely. Panis thought for a while before striking his hands together.

Panis: "This village has no specialty food, but the village chief should have an old book. I'll ask him about it. How's that?"

Old books were good. They certainly intrigued Hihiro. If he could get his hands on the book just by cleaning those bugs then he didn't have any complaints.

Hihiro: "Fine. I'll lend you a hand. But, keep your promise!"

When Panis and Coco heard those words they reflectively smiled but Panis turned gloomy again.

"I, I know I asked you, but... Are you strong?" Panis asked while looking anxiously at Hihiro from head to toe.

"Don't know. But, I'm at least good enough to do something about them." Hihiro said while look at the bean pole and chubby combo. Panis was flabbergasted by Hihiro's confidence but Hihiro ignored him and swiftly went into action.

Nies picked up a pebble from the ground and threw it at Spiky Beanpole. It pleased him how it hit the spiky beanpole right on the face, but the other villagers went pale as soon as it happened.

"Get out! Idiiooot!"

Spiky Beanpole's expression as he slowly looked at Nies spoke volumes: I'm going to kill this brat.

Nies who was feeling pleased just seconds ago was now frozen on the spot under Spiky Beanpole's murderous intent.

"St-stop it!" The village chief quickly stood in front of Nies to protect him. Spiky Beanpole thought that the village chief was in the way and sent him flying with a hard punch.

Then Spiky Beanpole drew the sword on his waist and pointed it at Nies. Paralyzed by fear, Nies didn't move an inch.

“Brat, any last words?”

“D-don’t...”

Nies shook his head while shedding tears but that didn’t stop Spiky Beanpole. Spiky Beanpole smiled happily, raised his sword into the air and then swung it down.

Whoosh!

Everyone gulped and closed their eyes. They all thought that Nies’s life was over.

“Owwww! It hurtssss!”

The one who was screaming out in pain and bleeding was Spiky Beanpole. Something had pierced his sword arm.

It was definitely a blade. Crimson liquid was dripping down his arm from where he was pierced with the blade. Everyone became dumbfounded while watching the bizarre scene. His arm was undoubtedly pierced by a sword, but the length of it was clearly too long.

Everyone looked to see where the blade had come from. All eyes fell on Hiiro. It was Hiiro Okamura who had attacked the spiky beanpole.



(As I thought, using 『Extend 伸』 with 《Word Magic》 is really useful.)

He had extended the blade by writing 『Extend 伸』 on it, fully aware that it was now roughly 6.5m^{2VI}) long. However no one present understood what had happened in this bizarre scene.

Without a moment’s delay, Hiiro reverted his sword back to normal by writing 『Origin 元』. The blade slipped out of Spiky Beanpole’s arm with a whoosh, he groaned in pain and his arms trembled dropping his raised sword. A great amount of sweat was accumulating on his face.

“Stand back, brat.”

Nies: “On-onii-chan... Wh-why?”

“I’m getting paid for this, so I’m lending a hand.” Hiiro bluntly stated. Nies’s beamed and let out a relieved sigh.

“Wh-who the hell’re you?!” Spiky Beanpole frantically screamed, enduring the pain while opening his bloodshot eyes.

“I have no obligation to answer you. Hurry —.”

“Wha!?” Spiky Beanpole couldn’t react at all as Hiiro leaped at him with an incredible speed. Then Hiiro slashed him with his sword.

“— Take this.”

SLAAAASH

In one swing, the blade cut from Spiky Beanpole’s left shoulder into his right flank, splashing blood everywhere. Spiky Beanpole collapsed to the ground from the damage.

“Im... Possible...”

Everyone thought that spiky beanpole was dead but his twitching showed that he was still alive. It seems that he had completely lost consciousness.

“Like I thought, guys like him aren’t anything special.”

Bald Chubby finally noticed that something was wrong and came out of the store.

“Ah... What’s this? Why’s my bro on the ground?”

“Enough with the questions. Come.” Hiiro said as he agilely leaped towards Bald Chubby and swung his sword just like he did before, but...

CLIIIIING

He was stopped by a metallic sound.

(Damn! He’s wearing chain mail!)

Although Hiiro had slashed Bald Chubby, it didn't feel like he had cut flesh. Instead the sensation of a metallic resistance lingered in Hiiro's hands.

"M-my clothes. How dare you!" Bald Chubby said as he ripped his already torn clothes some more. (Weren't you angry over your clothes?) Hiiro wanted to ask. Just like Hiiro had thought, bald chubby was wearing chain mail underneath his clothes.

Bald Chubby drew his broadsword from his back and swung it with a swish.

(Mhm, considering my gear, I'll die if I take that hit outright.) Hiiro thought and put distance between himself and bald chubby.

"I, I'll turn you into minced meeeaat!"

"Shut it, Bald Chubby and bring it on."

"Ch-chubby? Youuu! Don't call me chuubbbby!"

Bald Chubby swung his sword with all his might. Since Hiiro knew that it was aimed at his head, he dodged by squatting down and slashed at Bald Chubby's legs. But once again, there was a metallic sound.

"Oh come on, this Bald Chubby is wearing full body armour? Impressive he can move around."

Normally it would be too heavy to even walk around. But while his movements were dull, he still managed to move around, so he must have considerable power.

"But it's meaningless if he can't hit his target. Besides, I can also fight like this." Hiiro said, putting his sword away and toyed with his opponent by moving around swiftly.

Bald: "Uh, Urgh, where? Where's he?"

With his characteristic speed, Hiiro had gone around to Bald Chubby's back. Bald chubby was still searching around restlessly for Hiiro. Concentrating magic power into his fingertip, he then wrote a word onto Bald Chubby's chain mail.

After quickly falling back, he activated the magic in his mind. Bald Chubby suddenly turned bright red and started to roll around on the ground.

“H-ho-hoot?! Wh-what’s this?! Why’s it so hot?!”

Hiiro had written 『Heat 熱』. The character only went as far as heating up his chainmail, so it couldn’t have been that hot.

The villagers were dumbfounded at the figure of bald chubby rolling on the ground.

“Okay, all done.” Hiiro looked down on Bald Chubby and faintly smiled.

“Guh... H... Hot... What did... you do...?”

“Who knows? You’ll never find out, Bald Chubby. Later.” He said, using his right hand he hit bald chubby in the face with all his might. He could finally damage Bald Chubby with his own hands.

“Gweh!” Bald Chubby lost his consciousness while his body smoked. At that moment, Hiiro heard a familiar sound in his head.

(Oh, so even guys like these gives me EXP?)

He walked over to Spiky Beanpole and searched his pockets.

“... Ah, found it. Here.” Hiiro said and threw the papers at the village chief. The village chief quickly caught it.

“What happens from now on is up to you.”

“Th-this is the village’s title deed...?”

“Hurry up and call the army to take these guys away. They won’t wake for a while, but tie them up properly.”

“Uh-Uhm...”

The village chief who looked as if he had no clue what was going on, gradually caught up with the current situation, looked at the defeated two once more and smiled.

“O-oh...”

And then...

“Yaaaaaayy!”

The overwhelming cheer of the villagers reached his ears. Hiiro mumbled, “So noisy” with one eye closed but no one heard him. The village chief took his hand and thanked him in tears.

“Thank you! Thank you so much!”

“S-sure.” Hiiro replied bewildered. Then Panis came over.

Panis: “Yo-you’re quite the remarkable adventurer, aren’t you?”

“I wonder? Aren’t those guys just weak?”

Panis: “Not at all. Those two are known as the 《Harios Brothers》 and are quite skilled adventurers. Although notorious.”

Hiiro gave a brief nod. To be honest, he wasn’t interested in their life story. Then he suddenly felt a light hit on his bottom. When he looked to see who it was, there stood Nies.

Nies: “What’s with that? If you’re that strong, then you should’ve helped us from the start!”

“Hey Nies!” The village chief scolded Nies and in the next moment everyone was surprised at Hiiro’s action. Hiiro had lightly nudged Nies’s head with a thump.

“That hurt! What’re you doing!?”

“Like I said, I’m not a Hero. I don’t help people out for free. This time, I received a request from the Old Man, so I helped out. Of course, reward included.”

“Wha... Coco as well?” Nies asked Coco. She replied with, “Yes”, smiled like a blooming flower and gave a big nod.

“Also, it was a one-time thing.”

“Wha?!” Nies said while raising his fist. Hiiro ignored the now pouting Nies and turned to speak with Panis. Of course, he wanted to talk about the reward.

“Now then, Old Man. Can you immediately go and ask the village chief about the book?”

“A-ah, sure can but...” Panis smiled bitterly while looking at Nies who was glaring at Hiiro with teary eyes and his cheeks puffed out. When Panis approached the village chief to talk about Hiiro’s reward, the chief agreed straight away and told Hiiro that he would bring the book over later.

The village chef also offered to remit his lodging fees which he gladly accepted. A luxurious meal would also be prepared for him at the inn, Hiiro thought that he had come across some unexpected good fortune.

Panis: “Now, let’s go!”

“Mhm? Go where?”

(Haven’t I already finished my business with Panis?) Hiiro thought as he stared at Panis.

Panis: “What? Did you forget already? I told you I’ll give you the finest weapon in my store.”

“... I should have already received the reward for this request.”

Panis: “Not at all. You haven’t received any reward from me yet. I’m feeling my best right now! I want you to accept my reward!”

It seems that Panis will also be giving Hiiro a reward. Since Hiiro had nothing to lose from accepting the reward, he obediently accepted Panis’s offer.

After that, they headed towards Panis’s shop. Whenever Hiiro met a villager on the way to the shop, he was thanked. When Hiiro had arrived at this village he wasn’t welcomed at all, but now he was like a VIP.

(So self-interested.)

He could relate to them, but their sudden change in attitude didn’t leave him with a favourable impression.

Panis: “This is my store.”

“Oh, you sell amour as well, not just weapons.”

Hihiro looked around the shop and roughly checked the products.

“You said you would give me your finest weapon, but which is it?”

Panis: “Fufufufufu. I’m glad you asked.”

His laugh was a bit annoying. Hihiro expected Panis to take out something but he didn’t. Then Panis went back to the back of the store and brought back a single sword.

Panis: “This is it!”

“Hoh.”

Panis: “It’s called 『Piercer』 .”

It looked like a katana and the blade of the sword was the same length as a katana. The only difference was that the blade was as clear as ice. It was breathtakingly beautiful. Every time light reflected off the blade, it glistened.

Panis: “This katana specialises in piercing. By the way, do you know about katanas? A katana is a weapon that was originally created by some of the 『Beastman』 . Unlike the swords made by the 『Human Race』 which focuses on slashing with one’s strength, the katana has a sharp blade to cut up the prey by utilising speed instead of power.”

Being a Japanese person, Hihiro knew all of that but he listened quietly.

Panis: “Of course, I can guarantee the sharpness of 『Piercer』 . But its true value, like the name implies, its ability to pierce anything. It may look like this, but I guarantee it’s sturdy!”

“Where did you get this sword from?”

Panis: “Through my connections as a shopkeeper. I’ve treasured it until now, since I wanted to make it into a family heirloom.”

“I’m surprised those two didn’t take it.”

“Yeah, well, I did hide it in the basement.” Panis said while puffing his chest out in pride. It must be that important to him.

“Can I really take it? It’s an heirloom, right? Which means it’s not for sale. I thought you were giving me your finest weapon?”

Since the katana wasn’t displayed in the shop, Hiiro thought that it had nothing to do with the shop.

Panis: “Well, it is regrettable, but I feel like I can entrust it to you.”

“... Aren’t you giving too much credit? It’s not like I took out those guys because I wanted to. As I told the Brat, I’m not a hero.”

Panis: “That doesn’t matter.”

“Mmh?”

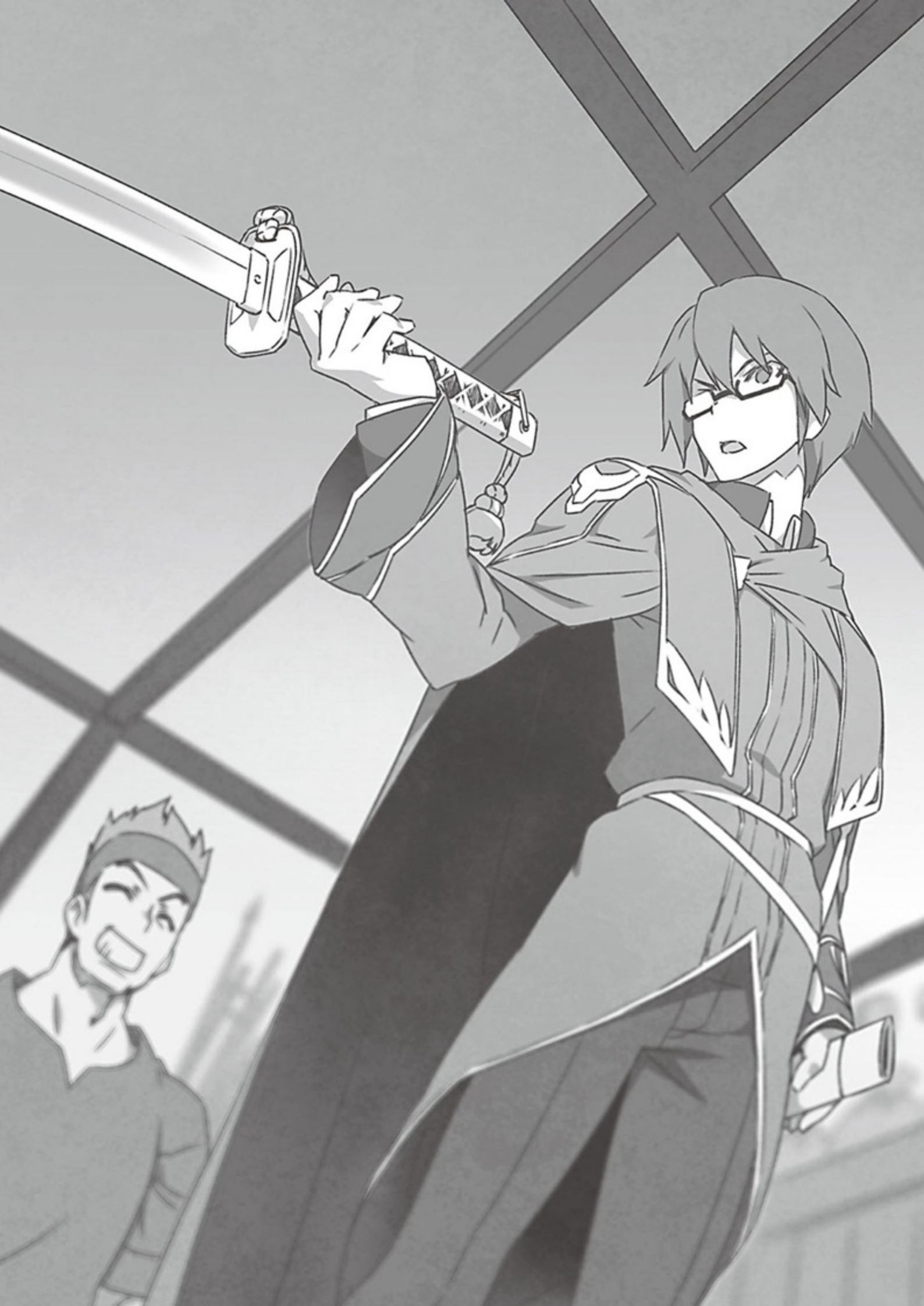
Panis: “You saved this village. We are incredibly grateful about that, no matter how it came to be.”

Hiiro looked at the sword once more and for some reason was overcome with the urge to hold it.

“... May I?”

Panis: “Sure, take it.”

“Okay, thanks.”



He accepted 『Piercer』 with both hands. The katana fit perfectly in his hands as if he'd been using it forever, despite only touching it for the first time.

When he hung the katana on his waist, it was yet again a perfect fit. His face brightened up. As a Japanese male, it was quite satisfying to have a katana hanging on one's waist.

(What a lucky find.)

He had no complaints since he had gained a level and found a good sword. After Panis thanked him for the second time, Hihiro left the shop and returned to the inn since there was nothing more to do today.

On the way to the inn someone blocked his path.

“Onii-chan, got a minute?” It was Nies and next to him was Coco. Nies got angry when Hihiro made a big sigh.

Nies: “Hey! Why’re you looking so annoyed?!”

“... Hah.”

Nies: “See, you’re annoyed again!”

Hihiro wanted to tell him not to point at other people but there would be no end to it if he paid heed to him, so he wanted to get this over with quickly.

“What do you want, Brat?”

Nies: “Don’t call me a brat! Even though I look like this, I’m already seven!”

“Yeah, you’re a splendid brat.”

Nies: “Grr~!”

“Enough, that’s our benefactor, Nies.” Coco scolds Nies.

Nies: “I know that, but he keeps treating me like a child!”

“... Hah, I’ll ask again, what do you want?”

Nies: "... Tell me your name."

"... Huh?"

Nies: "Your name! My father told me to ask you!"

"Your father? Who's that?"

Nies: "The village chief."

"... You're his son?"

"Fufu, awesome, right ~." Nies said proudly but Hiiro wasn't the least bit envious. Coco stared at Nies in shock.

"Ah ~ yeah, yeah. Really amazing ~, I'm so surprised ~. It's soooo amaz~ing."

Nies: "... You don't think that at all."

"Duh."

Nies: "You just admitted it?"

He had his mouth wide open in shock but at this rate this would really take up a lot of time, so Hiiro decided to tell him his name.

"It's Hiiro. Hiiro Okamura."

Nies: "Hero^{VII})... Awesome!"

Coco: "Ye-yeah!"

"Hah?"

Hiiro was puzzled as to why their eyes were suddenly sparkling, so he stared at them blankly.

Nies: "I see ~, so you're Hero ~."

"... I don't get you, but you have to tell the village chief, right? Shouldn't you be going?"

Hihiro didn't care where, he just wanted them to leave soon.

"Ah, right! Father was busy tying up those guys, so we couldn't talk to him! See you, Onii-chan!"

"Sure, sure."

Niels waved his hands energetically while running away and Hihiro thought to himself, (How young). Hihiro thought that he shouldn't be too farsighted and shook his head. After all he was only 16 years old.

Strangely enough Coco didn't chase after Nies but stayed where she was.

"What's up?"

"Uh-uhm... Here!"

She handed Hihiro small wrapper paper. He received it without thinking. There was a sweet smell coming from the wrapping paper.

"Um, Uhm... That's my thanks!" She said then laughed happily. "Ehehe." With that Coco shyly chased after Nies but stopped halfway.

"Thank you ~, Mis~ter!" Coco shouted before running again.

It seems that the compensation he received from Coco was homemade sweets. When he opened the wrapping paper, there were several bite-sized cookies inside.

The cookies weren't freshly baked as they weren't warm but when Hihiro threw one into his mouth, he was able to enjoy the crunchy texture and sweetness of the fruits.

(Well, it was a serious request fee for a brat.)

When he returned to the inn, the innkeeper's attitude towards him changed completely, like a totally different person.

Just like the village chief had said earlier, a lavish meal was made for him and while he was grateful, he was a bit disgusted by the amount of preparation that they had done. He wondered if he felt like that because of his twisted personality and shook his head.

After a while Nies appeared together with the village chief. Since the village chief couldn't properly express his gratitude due to dealing with the aftermath from before, he had rushed over after finishing to thank Hiiro again.

Brye: "It's not much but please accept this."

It was certainly an old book, this book seems to be about this world's history. It was the best reward for Hiiro, who was interested in the history of 【Edea】 .

Hiiro placed the book in his room and went out to buy provisions for his journey ... But... Every villager he passed began to shower him with gratitude as he walked around. Replying to each of them was getting annoying so he secluded himself in his room.

He wasn't physically tired at all but he was mentally exhausted. He decided to confirm his 《Status》 once again.

Hiiro Okamura Lv 20
HP: 320/320 MP: 900/900 EXP: 5672 NEXT: 520
ATK: 139 (200) DEF: 100 (115) AGI: 210 (212) HIT: 112 (120) INT: 189 (193)
《 Magic Attribute》 None 《 Magic》 Word Magic (Single Chain Release • Air Writing Release) 《 Titles》 Innocent Bystander • Otherworlder • Word Master • Awakened One • Ripper

His stat growth seemed out of the ordinary. Even if he had gained two levels, an increase of this much seemed strange. His HP was barely over 200 points before. His MP had also increased by a lot and his other stats which had been at double digits had increased exponentially. A few inconsistencies popped up. First was the abnormal gain in 《Status》. Of course he was happy about gaining two levels at once as he had been level 18 before.

(Well, I'm happy about it, but...) As he thought that, he shifted his gaze to the title column. 《Awakened One》 caught his attention. He'd figured that he got the 《Ripper》 title from defeating the Chubby & Beanpole combo but he had no explanation for the former title. For the time being he clicked on it to see the contents.

《Awakened One》

Enhancement for an otherworlder. Great addition to the status upon reaching level 20. Level-ups will give a small bonus from now on.

The next thing that caught his eye was 《Air Writing Release》. He unintentionally let his surprise show at this cheat. Being an otherworlder had its benefits. Hiiro was quite pleased about this blessing despite not being a hero.

《Air Writing Release》

MP Cost: 100

Able to write characters in the air with magic power. Activates by coming in contact with the target. It is also possible to shoot the written word; depending on the character used, it is also possible to activate it in the air. But, the character only flies straight like an arrow.

Hiiro didn't understand it very well so he tried it out. He concentrated magic power into his fingertips and wrote a character in mid-air and imagined it, like he always did when he wrote on the ground. When he finished writing, a pale word appeared. It was 『Float (浮)』.

The words followed his finger whenever he moved it. He imagined shooting it at the vase in the room. Then, just like a trigger, the character headed straight for the vase. The character stuck onto the vase the moment it hit.

After reciting activate the vase surprisingly floated.

“Wow, that’s handy.”

With this, it was possible to attack the opponent by firing at it instead of having to set traps on the ground.

Hiiro was amazed at his own power becoming more and more cheat-like. Hiiro thought that this was becoming more enjoyable. By the way the floating vase suddenly dropped down after a minute.



The next day, the village chief was waiting in front of the inn to say his thanks to Hiiro again, when the innkeeper came rushing outside.

Brye: “Wh-what’s the matter?”

Innkeeper: “Yo-you see...”

The village chief received an explanation from the innkeeper who had checked Hiiro’s room.

Brye: “Say what?! He’s gone?!”

Hiiro had left the village early in the morning before the sun had risen. The reason he had left so early was because he had predicted the village chief’s visit. He also thought that it would get troublesome when the army arrived.

Brye: “Oh god, he left without knowing how thankful we are to him...”

“That’s so like him ~.” Nies said while laughing. Panis and Coco were also nodding their head in agreement.

Nies: “I wonder if I’ll ever see Hero again.”

The village chief patted Nies’s and Coco’s heads, then answered, “You will. He’s our saviour after all.”

Everyone nodded in agreement with the village chief's words.



“Aacchoo!” Hihiro made his way towards 【Surge】 , a city near the country border while sneezing loudly.

His 《Status》 had increased drastically so he mowed down the monsters that had appeared as if they were weeds.

He also tried out his new 『Piercer』 and it was easy to handle. He was able to kill monsters in one strike since the katana's attack power was high.

“Okay, I have to pass 【Torchu Mountain Range】 , then go through 【Marrington Highway】 to get to 【Surge】 .” He confirmed his route on the spread out map.

“At any rate, it's still a long way away.”

The scorching sun above him made him scowl his face as he gazed upon 【Torchu Mountain Range】 in the distance.

While walking towards it, he reviewed the possibilities of his 《Word Magic》 . He had tried various things and got to know that 《Word Magic》 had characters with temporary and permanent effects.

For example, if he made things float with his magic, the effects would be gone within a minute and it would return to its original state. Whereas, writing 『Extend 伸』 on his sword blade or 『Soft 柔』 were permanent effects. On the other hand, 『Flame 炎』 and 『Heat 熱』 , which he used on the Chubby & Beanpole combo, only lasted for around a minute.

(Guess it goes like this? Changing the target's nature or shape is permanent, but everything else lasts for a minute?)

Hihiro needed to do more experiments and test out his hypothesis. Using his magic recklessly could result in 《Rebound》 . His power was outstanding. If he couldn't control it, he could easily see himself receiving considerable damage from 《Rebound

》 .

For that reason, he decided to refrain from using characters that directly affected the life and death of living creatures as much as possible. If something was to go wrong, a 《Rebound》 from that would surely be lethal.

Magic was imagination. Without a clear image the magic won't activate and even if it did activate insufficient control could cause it to 《Rebound》 .

Hihiro fully understood why the old woman in 【Victorias】 had told him that knowledge was important.

Along the way he tried out various 《Word Magic》 . Since he carried plenty of MP restoration pills with him, he could experiment to his heart's content.

He discovered some advantages and disadvantages to his magic. First, was that he now knew the special characteristics of his magic. He concluded that it was an important thing to know in this world^{VIII}).



[Taishi]

“Phew ~ I’ve got stiff shoulders ~.”

The person who was rubbing their shoulders tiredly was one of the heroes who was summoned by the 【Human Country • Victorias】 , Taishi Aoyama. Next to him stood the other three heroes, looking just as tired. Lilith, the first princess stood in front of them. While watching them she said, “Good work, everyone. I just heard from Vale that you acquired many wonderful things from the quest this time as well”.

The person currently training Taishi and the others was Vale, the captain of the second division of the army.

The quest that they had received this time was the subjugation of a monster called Stinger Bat which inhabited 【Droke Cave】 . Recently a considerable number of them were inhabiting the cave and they would go out and cause trouble in town so a

subjugation request was put up.

The request rank was quite high at C rank because it was a dark place with horrible footing and poisonous monsters also inhabited 【Droke Cave】 .

Since the four had greatly increased their levels and had superb teamwork, they had managed to hunt over a hundred Stringer Bats.

The group concluded that the monsters must have hid themselves and returned to the castle.

“The EXP from all the monsters sure was worth it.” Taishi said and everyone nodded in response.

“Yes, we also discovered some flaws in our teamwork, so we can work on that now.”

Chika Suzumiya wiped her sweat with a towel.

“Okay, let’s take a look at your 《Status》 now.” Everyone checked their status like Lilith told them to.

Taishi Aoyama
Lv 20
HP: 120/379
MP: 89/322
EXP: 4200
NEXT: 987
ATK: 195 (263)
DEF: 177 (210)
AGI: 115 (137)
HIT: 144 (158)
INT: 101 (122)
《 Magic Attribute》
Fire • Wind • Lightning • Light
《 Magic》
Fireball (Fire • Attack)

Flame Lance (Fire • Attack)
Wind Cutter (Wind • Attack)
Cyclone (Wind • Attack)
Thunder Shock (Lightning • Attack)
Thunder Break (Lightning • Attack)
Lighting (Light • Effect)
Light Arrow (Light • Attack)

《Titles》

Hero • Otherworlder • Harem Creator • Awakened One

Shuri Minamoto

Lv 20

HP: 200/290

MP: 29/480

EXP: 4200

NEXT: 987

ATK: 97 (119)

DEF: 99 (121)

AGI: 124 (135)

HIT: 110 (120)

INT: 190 (215)

《Magic Attribute》

Wind • Water • Light

《Magic》

Wind Cutter (Wind • Attack)

Green Bind (Wind • Support)

Water Wall (Water • Support)

Bubble Shot (Water • Attack)

Heal (Light • Recovery)

Antidote (Light • Recovery)

Charge (Light • Support)

《Titles》

Hero • Otherworlder • Yamato Nadeshiko • Awakened One

Chika Suzumiya

Lv 20

HP: 134/355

MP: 65/318

EXP: 4200

NEXT: 987

ATK: 190 (250)

DEF: 185 (210)

AGI: 126 (155)

HIT: 127 (148)

INT: 108 (128)

《Magic Attribute》

Fire • Earth • Ice • Light

《Magic》

Fireball (Fire • Attack)

Flame Lance (Fire • Attack)

Grave (Earth • Attack)

Earthquake (Earth • Attack)

Ice Needle (Ice • Attack)

Ice Tornado (Ice • Attack)

Lighting (Light • Effect)

Light Arrow (Light • Attack)

《Titles》

Hero • Otherworlder • Sports Queen • Awakened One

Shinobu Akamori Lv 20
HP: 90/295 MP: 34/448 EXP: 4200 NEXT: 987
ATK: 99 (127) DEF: 97 (124) AGI: 147 (170) HIT: 109 (122) INT: 196 (222)
《 Magic Attribute》 Water • Lightning • Light 《 Magic》 Mist (Water • Support) Aqua Spiral (Water • Attack) Paralyze (Lightning • Effect) Acceleration (Lightning • Support) Heal (Light • Recovery) Cleaning (Light • Recovery/Support) Ray (Light • Attack) 《 Titles》 Hero • Otherworlder • Curious One • Awakened One

(Everything looks good, but I could do without the Harem Creator title.)

Taishi wasn't satisfied with his own title. He didn't have a single memory of creating a harem.

"What're you spacing out for, Taishi?"

“Eh? Ah, nope ~ nothing! Ahahaha!”

He was surprised when Chika suddenly called out to him because there was no way he could tell her about his title. He couldn't just come out and say, “Hey, you guys are a part of my harem!”

Chika: “You weirdo, Taishi. Anyway, we've become rather strong.”

“Yeah, our hard work paid off.” Just like her title stated, Shuri Minamoto let out a Yamato Nadeshiko smile.

“Yeah, Shuri-cchi is right. We should keep this up ~.” The girl with the cat eyes, Akamori Shinobu said enthusiastically while making a victory pose.

“Yes, you are all correct.” Lilith who was also happy, made a cute smile.

“But I'm really worn out today ~.”

“Gees, Taishi, you're so sloppy!” Chika cautioned Taishi, who was lying on the ground.

Taishi: “Isn't it fine, just for today ~. Ah, that reminds me, Lilith, did anything weird happen lately?”

“Weird? Mm ~ that's right...” Lilith cutely tilted her head and looked pensive.

Lilith: “Now that you mention it, the soldiers who returned from border patrol were talking about this earlier. Apparently some wanted men have been captured in a village called 【Ames】 the other day.”

“ 【Ames】 is a village to the west of here, right?” Lilith responded to Shinobu's question by nodding her head.

Lilith: “Yes.”

Shinobu: “Were they famous? The men who were caught?”

Lilith: “Yes, the 《Harios Brothers》 are notorious adventurers that commit crimes such as burglary and murder. Of course, when their crimes were exposed, they were stripped off their adventurer qualifications. So it would be more correct to call them

former adventurers.”

Shinobu: “Mhm, those guys were caught?”

Lilith: “Yes and the testimonies from the villagers just can’t be accurate.”

“What do you mean?” Everyone curiously paid attention to Lilith, not just Shinobu.

Lilith: “The villagers have been saying that a hero clad in a red robe came to their rescue when the 《Harios Brothers》 preyed on them.”

Shinobu: “Red robe? Hero? What the?”

Lilith: “All I know is that he had black hair, used magic that extended his sword and had the power to make his opponent faint just by touching them.”

Shinobu: “Black hair... It couldn’t be?”

Lilith: “Th-the report also mentioned... That he had a very arrogant attitude.”

“Black hair and arrogant?” Shinobu looked at everyone’s faces and apparently they were all thinking of the same person. But they all believed it had to be some kind of mistake.

Shinobu: “It can’t be... Him right? He said it himself that he was just an ordinary person after all.”

“He would never help anyone with that twisted personality of his.” Chika’s opinion of Hihiro was still the same and like always, Shuri scolded her.

“Fufu, that’s going too far, Chika-chan.”

“Hm ~ you got a point, but I wonder what really happened. Heck, where’s he now anyway?” Shinobu asked but no one knew the answer to that. Lilith also shook her head.

“Well, thinking won’t get us anywhere. We’ll just do what we can!” Chika declared encouragingly to everyone. Everyone responded with a nod.

CHAPTER 3

A SUDDEN ENCOUNTER

The 【Torchu Mountain Range】 was a monster's nest. Hiiro Okamura had to pass through here to get to 【Surge】 and thus was...

“UWAAAAH!”

... Running away with all his might. The reason for this was because a great variety of monsters were chasing after him.

“Da-Damn! Who would've thought that it was a 《Torchu Disaster Plant》 !?”

He quickly slipped into a gap in the rock letting the monsters pass him.

What had happened was this, he had finally arrived at the mountain range but noticed that his food was running out.

While he strolled around looking for something edible he found a plant growing on the side of the road. The plant bore fruits and emitted a sweet fragrance that smelt like strawberries. Furthermore, the fruits were quite large so he pulled out the plant thinking that it was edible.

However instead of roots, it had something shaped like a creepy wooden doll. It suddenly started screaming and his heart nearly flew out of his chest.

Hiiro then remembered that before he came here, the receptionist at the Guild had taught him about the monster called 《Torchu Disaster Plant》 . Once it was pulled out, it let out a shrilling scream that attracted any nearby monsters.

Not knowing that it was a 《Torchu Disaster Plant》 he froze up on the spot not comprehending his situation. As he stood there, frozen, a swarm of monsters were advancing on him.

(Oh man, this is truly an interesting world)

He held his breath and checked the surroundings. It looked like the monsters were gone.

(Fuh, I probably could've been able to take them down, but suddenly coming at me like that in such great number, bewildered me...)

"Still, I'm hungry."

Even more so since he ran excessively. He restlessly looked around for something edible and smelt a savoury aroma wafting in from somewhere. He immediately began to walk towards its source.

After walking for a while, he came across a small clear stream and nearby were some fishes being grilled on a bonfire. The delicious smell coming from the grilled fish stirred his hunger.

He gulped down his saliva and surveyed the area to find the person responsible for the fish; as far as he could see no one was around.

"Okay~..."

No one was around and the grilled fish in front of him looked so delicious. He was hungry. He checked around and still no one was around.

"... Bon appetite."

He couldn't hold himself back. The moment he tried to take the fish,

"GET AWAAAYY!"

A terrible bellow of rage and killing intent leaked out from behind him so he made a giant leap away from his location. At the place where Hiroyuki was at before stood a man thrusting a wooden pole into the ground.

"Get away! I won't give you any! That's my food!" The man said while pointing the pole at Hiroyuki. The man had short ruffled blue hair, a goatee and looked like he was in his 30s.

Even with armour covering his body, it was clear that he had a very muscular build.

He carried a great sword on his back, which lead Hiiro to think that things would become troublesome if the man drew it.

(Still...)

Glancing at the fish, Hiiro's stomach growled again.

"Hey boy! Name yourself! Snatching food from the great Arnold is inexcusable! Name yourself!"

Hiiro looked at the hot-headed man with drowsy eyes. It seems that the man's name was Arnold.

Arnold: "I've nothing to give you! Name yourself and be gone!"

It looked like Hiiro had to state his name no matter what so he considered what to do.

"... Mm, hear me out first."

Arnold: "Why're you acting all composed for, you thief! I won't be tricked! This is my food! After all, I caught it!"

"... Those fishes are yours?"

Arnold: "Yeah! What about it?!"

"Okay, give it to me."

Arnold: "Screw you!"

"I'm starving, so can you give it to me."

Arnold: "G-grrrrrr. Gimme, gimme, gimme, gimme. Just how'd your parents raise you, you damn Brat!"

"Who cares about that, just give it to me, you hot-headed Old Man."

Arnold: "Say what!? Who're you calling hot-blooded?!"

Arnold became so furious, that one would think he'd explode if angered further. Just

when Hiiro thought Arnold would actually transform, someone came out from the rustling bushes.

“Un-uncle...”

It was a girl around the age of ten. She had shoulder length silver hair and wore a cute knitted hat as if to conceal her hair. She had big eyes with sky-blue pupils but right now those eyes were filled with anxiety. Her small body was slightly trembling. She was staring at Hiiro fearfully.

Arnold: “O-oh ~ Muir! Gimme a moment ~! I’m gonna beat some sense into this scoundrel, with my fist of love!”

The man seemed to be running his mouth off. Hiiro glanced at the little girl and she hid herself, startled. He didn’t know why she was so frightened.

“... Hah, I understand.”

Arnold: “Mm? What’d you understand, Boy?”

“I won’t ask for it all, so share a bit with me.”

Arnold: “Were you never taught about how to ask for favours, Rascal!?”

“What? I won’t compromise any further.”

Arnold: “You aren’t in any position to say that, dammit!”

Arnold tightly grasped his pole and regarded Hiiro with hostility. He then leaped at Hiiro with incredible speed. Hiiro moved away from his spot and dodged the pole attack from Arnold.

(So fast... And he’s not even serious yet.)

While dodging, Hiiro measured his opponent’s strength by observing him. His opponent was also doing the same thing.



[Arnold]

(Mhm, this Brat's quick on his feet!)

Arnold was just testing him, Hihiro had easily evaded Arnold's attack even though he had never seen it before and so Arnold concluded that Hihiro was quite capable. After putting some distance between them, the two glared at each other.

Hihiro grabbed the hilt of his 『Piercer』. Arnold threw the wooden pole away and also grabbed the hilt of the great sword on his back. There was tension in the air and in that moment of silence...

“KYAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!” A sudden scream was heard. It came from the girl called Muir.

Three Barbarous Bears, a monster the size of two bears, had appeared behind Muir and were ready to attack her.

Arnold: “MUIIIIIIIIR!”

Arnold's face stiffened as he drew his great sword and headed straight towards the Barbarous Bear. Compared to earlier, his speed was now on a completely different level. The monsters were startled by his speed.

Arnold succeeded in cutting off the arm of the monster that had tried to seize Muir by applying force to his sword.

“GUUUUAAAH?!”

The monster's arm dropped to the ground with a thud. While the Barbarous Bear was in agony, it swung its other arm at Arnold and sprayed blood around. Arnold parried it with his sword and desperately protected Muir, who was behind him.

Muir: “Un-uncle...”

“It's okay! Leave this to me and get away from—.” Arnold tried to tell her to get away from here but another Barbarous Bear appeared from behind him.

Arnold: "Damn!"

At this rate Muir would be in danger. But right now Arnold had his hands full with the three monsters in front of him. If he was to engage the monster behind him, the three in front would be free to attack.

(Damn! What should I do? Shall I use it...? No, Muir will also be caught up in it if I use it now...!)

He was at a lost. Then he heard a voice from the distant.

"Hey ~ can I eat the fish now?"

Hihiro stared at the fish in front of him as if he was out of place.



[Hihiro]

Arnold: "Hey, wait! How can you talk about fish at a time like this?! You surprised me! Read the mood, dammit!"

"Say what you will. Looks like you're having trouble, huh."

Arnold: "I-if you can see that, help out!"

"I refuse. Why do I have to work for free? Ridiculous."

Arnold: "Say what!"

Arnold dealt with the monster's attack while his eyes became bloodshot. Then without delay he repelled the attacks and spun his body around and stood in front of Muir. The four Barbarous Bear's surrounded Arnold and Muir. Muir could receive damage with just a single careless move from Arnold.

Hihiro remained composed even while watching them get cornered. His hunger had won him over and he was becoming increasingly irritated at the sound of his growling stomach.

(So, what should I do...? My stomach is growling annoyingly... Should I secretly eat it? Nah, he'll notice...)

As he was staring at the savoury fish, a knife was thrown at his feet. Taken aback by the knife stuck into the ground, he glared at the person who threw it.

“Hey, what’re you trying to do, Old Man.”

Yes, Arnold had thrown that knife.

Arnold: “Ookay ~ listen carefully, you fool! I, I’ll give you the fish! So help me out! It’s a deal! If you wanna eat, listen to me!”

“I refuse.”

Arnold: “Wha?!”

Arnold didn’t think that Hihiro would refuse at this point.

“Right now, I can just snatch the fish and run away!”

Arnold: “Are you the devil!?”

“You can’t take a joke? Old Man.”

Arnold: “Don’t ask for the impossible in a situation like this!”

Hihiro truly handled things at his own pace. If he stayed here any longer, he’d just get hungrier. He wanted to stop the unpleasant sounds his stomach was making first.

(Oh well, let’s work a bit for the fish...)

Just as he thought that, Arnold cut off a monster’s arm. The arm flew through the air and landed splendidly on top of the bonfire.



[Arnold]

“... Ah.”

Arnold: “Huh? N-n-no waaaaaaay?!”

The fishes were cruelly crushed by the arm and was coated with sand and peddles, making it inedible. Arnold let out a terrible scream. Hiiro lost all motivation upon seeing the fish.

“... Well, I’ll be leaving now.”

Hiiro started to walk away from the scene.

Arnold: “Oi, oi, oi, oi, oi, oi, oi, oi. Hold it!”

“... What? Since my pay has turned out like this, I’ve lost all motivation.”

Arnold: “Grr...”

If it had been Hiiro’s fault, Arnold could’ve forced Hiiro to take responsibility but Hiiro hadn’t agreed yet. Although an accidental, it was Arnold’s fault that the negotiations in the form of fish had failed.

If he couldn’t get Hiiro’s cooperation he would have to face the ferocious monsters while protecting Muir. He would have had no trouble facing them on his own but since he had to protect Muir, it was difficult. If possible, he wanted Hiiro’s help.

(Dammit, how do I get him to help...?)

He was unsatisfied, there seemed to be no other way to protect Muir. He could slightly grasp Hiiro’s abilities. While he was thinking of how to convince Hiiro to help, an idea came to him.

Arnold: “O-okay! Listen, Boy!”

Without knowing how Arnold was feeling, Hiiro ignored him and started moving.

Arnold: “Sheesh! If it’s gonna be like this, then I’ll have to use my last resort! I, I’ll share a bit of my 『Aqua Hound Meat』 with you, so help me oouutt!”

Hihiro’s ears perked up and he stopped moving. It seems that Hihiro became slightly interested after hearing the word, meat.

“... What’s that?”

Arnold: “You don’t knowww?! It’s a first-grade meat! Eating it grilled will make it melt on your tongue and you’ll get addicted!”

“... Hoh.”

Arnold saw Hihiro’s eyes sparkling with interest.



[Hihiro]

(Addicted, huh...) Hearing that word reminded him of the 『Addictive Seafood Noodles』 that he had eaten before. It had been delicious; so incredibly delicious. He really wanted to eat it again.

Hihiro loved eating and always jumped at the opportunity to eat something delicious. So he was especially receptive when he heard Arnold say “delicious”.

“Hey, you’re telling the truth, right?”

Arnold: “Huh? Of course! You think I’d be lying right now?! But don’t misunderstand, okay?! You won’t be getting it all to yourself, you hear! Woah, dangerous!”

Arnold narrowly dodged the claw of a Barbarous Bear.

Arnold: “Dammit! Listen, Boy! I can guarantee that it’s super delicious! But I’m only giving you a portion!”

Arnold was too focused on convincing Hihiro that he neglected to protect Muir. Taking advantage of the chance, a Barbarous Bear grabbed Muir with its big hand and was about to eat her.

Muir: "Kyyaah!"

Arnold: "Oh shit!"

Just when Arnold had thought that Muir was done for; the bear was felled with a single slash.

"GUUAAAHH?!"

The girl fell from its hand towards the ground. Muir tightly shut her eyes and braced herself for the impact. Arnold saw that and shouted. Then...

"Easy now."

Muir: "... Eh?"

She had braced herself but felt no pain. Hiiro had caught her and was carrying her gently.

"... Can you stand?"

Muir: "Eh, ah... Yes."

"Then stand up; you're in the way of the fight. Go hide in the back."

Muir gazed at Hiiro blushing. Arnold sighed with relief when he saw that she was safe. Hiiro was bothered by their attitude and frowned.

"Hey, hurry up and hide, Chibi."

"Ah, yes..." She responded with a small nod and distanced herself while looking like she had something she wanted to say.

"Old Man, stop spacing out and fight."

"Sh-shut up! Right back at you, don't blame me if you die!"

"Ridiculous. As if these guys could kill me."

Hiiro readied himself to attack and aimed his killing intent towards the enemy. He

intended to completely slaughter them. This was his way of dealing with the monsters that were attacking.

Devoid of any other emotions, his hostility turned into blood-lust and dominated the surrounding area. Even the Barbarous Bear reacted to the blood-lust and all four focused their attention on Hiiro.

“It’s too troublesome to deal with them one at a time. Hey, Old Man, line them up.”

Arnold: “Huh? Say what?”

“Just do it. Save your questions for later.”

Arnold: “You... Fine!”

Arnold let out a sigh in resignation and sharply glared at the scattered Barbarous Bear while licking his lips.

Arnold: “I’ll do it. If you don’t wanna get caught up in it, then stand back!”

“So bossy.”

While complaining Hiiro took a big step backwards, curious about what Arnold would do. Arnold held his great sword with a backhand grip,

Arnold: “HAAAAAH...”

Arnold put power into the hand holding the sword. Suddenly the wind started gusting, even though there wasn’t so much as a breeze earlier. Hiiro felt the wind brush against his cheeks.

The wind gradually grew stronger and surprisingly coiled around Arnold’s sword.

Hiiro thought that Arnold would inhale but instead he leaped into the air spinning with his sword.

Arnold: “ 《Explosive Wind Claw》 !”

FWWOOOON!

Suddenly an enormous blast exploded upwards from the ground, no, from around Arnold. It was like a tornado. Even Hihiro, who was standing away from the blast, thought that he would get swept up into it.

The monsters were lifted up into the air without any resistance.

“Hoh, that’s quite good.”

Seeing that Hihiro gasped in admiration. Arnold could’ve sent the monsters flying at any time but didn’t do so as Muir had been close by.

“I didn’t feel any magic from that... Was that not magic?”

While Hihiro was in the middle of thinking, the Barbarous Bears were swirling up in the air while countless vacuum blades cut up their bodies. Before long, they fell in a line just as Hihiro had requested.

Arnold: “Hmph. You fine with them being in the air?”

“Yeah. It’s perfect.” Hihiro answered then aimed at the Barbarous Bear falling before his sword.

Arnold: “Hey, what are you...?”

“Shut up and watch.”

He cut short Arnold’s question and disregarded it. Arnold became sullen but watch attentively like he was told.

“Extend, 《Word Magic》 !”

The blade with the character 『Extend (伸) 』 written on it quickly stretched and pierced through the body of the falling Barbarous Bear.

The blade easily pierced through the flesh of the Barbarous Bears. Hihiro wasn’t sure if gravity had assisted or whether it was due to the sharpness of 『Piercer』 .

Arnold had stood there with his mouth agape at the scene. Completely oblivious to this, Hihiro slowly dropped his sword in front of him after he’d confirmed that all four

Barbarous Bears were pierced.

BAAAM

The ground shook greatly from the impact of the four falling Barbarous Bears hitting the ground. The four bodies didn't drop scattered as they were still tied together by the extended 『Piercer』 .

Hiiro muttered as he felt the Barbarous Bears gradually dying while groaning.

“One skewer of Barbarous Bear coming right up.”

Those words marked the end of the battle.

After the battle had ended Hiiro reverted his sword back by writing 『Origin 元』 on it. At any rate, the sharpness of 『Piercer』 could only be called first-rate. It had easily gone through the opponent as if it was piercing tofu.

(Nothing less from a katana that specializes in piercing.)

Hiiro nodded in satisfaction. Arnold who had been silent finally opens his mouth to talk.

Arnold: “Y-you... What'd you do?”

“Shouldn't you be more worried about the Chibi?”

Hiiro quickly changed the topic since he had no intention of explaining it. Arnold gasped and shouted out Muir's name. She slowly appeared from behind a rock where she had been hiding.

Arnold: “A-are you hurt?”

Muir: “N-no.”

“Thank god ~.”

Arnold sunk down to the ground feeling relieved from the bottom of his heart. After glancing at them quickly Hiiro quietly sheathed his katana. His stomach suddenly growled and while holding it, he walked towards Arnold.

“Hey, Old Man. Keep your promise.”

Arnold: “... What promise?”

“Hoh...”

Hiiro slightly drew his katana from its sheath with a clink.

Arnold: “Ju-just kidding! I’m kidding! Put that away!”

“Hurry and let me eat that addicting meat. I’m starving.”

Arnold: “... Hah, sorry Muir. I didn’t wanna eat it in a place like this...”

Muir: “I-it’s fine. I did get saved by him. Be-besides, isn’t it tastier when you eat with everyone?”

“Uuoooooh! Why are you such a good kid, Muir?!” Arnold embraced Muir while shouting emotionally. Normally this would be a heart-warming scene but while holding his stomach Hiiro said,

“Hurry up over there. I’m starving.”

An irritated vein popped up on Arnold’s forehead due to Hiiro’s attitude but he realized that it was pointless to say anything. So with a sigh he lead the two away.

Arnold: “Come along. I’ll start preparing the food.”

“Ah, I’ll help!” Muir said as if she wanted to tell them that she was going to do anything for them and she started moving.

“Erm ~ I think it was... Ah, here it is!” Arnold rummaged behind some rocks and pulled out a large bag. He opened the bag and took out yet another bag. Something thick and heavy seemed to be inside of that bag.

“Is that it?”

Arnold: “Ye-yeah! Inside is... This!”

What he pulled out was meat tied up with string. It was as big as a rugby ball.

Arnold: “Mhm, this is 《Aqua Hound Meat》. Moreover, it’s the thigh, the most delicious part!”

Arnold thrust the meat in front of Hiroyuki as if asking for his opinion. He seemed to be holding the meat while moving his index finger and his eyes were somewhat sparkling.

“Whatever, hurry and let me eat. Hurry it up.”

Arnold: “You sure are an arrogant brat. Eat some fruits until it’s done. But leave some for me.”

“I’ll try my best.”

Arnold: “No, no. Leave some for me!”

Hiroyuki ate two of the six red fruits that were the size of a fist that Arnold had taken out from a bag he received from Muir.

Arnold: “Nibble on that until I finish cooking.”

“More.”

Arnold: “Already!? I was prepared for it, but you’re gonna eat it all, aren’t you?! Ah, whatever. I’m gonna prepare the meat so be patient!”

Using a wooden pole Arnold took a big stone from the bonfire. By the looks of it the bright red stone was incredibly hot.

Muir: “Should I put it down, Uncle?”

Arnold: “Ah, be careful not to burn yourself.”

Muir: “Yup!”

Muir put the meat down on top of the stone. It sizzled deliciously and gradually

changed colours brilliantly, releasing meat juice and a fragrant smell.

All three of them couldn't help but gulp down their saliva. Little Muir was also unable to take her eyes off the meat.

"Hey, hey. Isn't it fine already?"

Arnold: "No, not yet. A certain procedure is needed to bring out the meat's best flavour."

"Certain procedure?"

The juice temporarily stopped oozing out of the meat and the string holding it together was cut then surprisingly, the meat started to swell up.

"O-oh, what's this!?"

Arnold: "That's meat swelling! It's unique to the 《Aqua Hound Meat》 ! It swells up when the excess fat is removed. It becomes about three times bigger."

It was amazing that it grew three times bigger. Its original size was already around the size of a rugby ball, three times more than that was quite big.

When the swelling hit its peak it started shaking, it wasn't like meat at all. Hiiro questioned if it was really meat but the smell coming from it told Hiiro that it was definitely meat. Before he knew it he was drooling uncontrollably.

Arnold: "Okay, Muir, get the containers!"

Muir: "Okay!"

Arnold was pretty excited. Muir nodded happily while taking out three containers from the bag. Arnold passed the knife that he kept on his waist to Muir and she quickly sliced the meat with a single slash. The knife cut through the meat without any resistance as if it was pudding. After equally splitting it into three portions, she put each portion into the containers.

The meat was very thick and heavy. It was big and had a strong presence. Normally Hiiro would not be able to finish something of this size but strangely he felt that he

would be able to.

“A-ah! Wa-wait!” Hihiro tried to dig in but Muir stopped him.

“What? Any more than this would be torture.”

His stomach had been growling in hunger for a while now. If he ignored it any longer something might really happen.

Muir: “Ah, I, I’m sorry! Bu-but, it’ll be perfect if you eat it with this!”

She pulled out an elongated container that contained something that looked like sauce from the bag.

“And that is?”

Muir: “A special sauce made from 《Alty Fruit》 !”

“... I don’t understand, but it’ll taste even better with that?”

Arnold: “Yeah, forget about getting addicted, it’ll send you straight to heaven. Because Muir made it!”

“You did?”

Muir: “Ah, this... Yes.”

Arnold chuckled. He seemed confident in the sauce that Muir had made. Muir smiled shyly.

“Heh, interesting. Count me in!”

The sauce was the same colour as ketchup but was more smooth than thick. It had a faint sweet and fruity smell.

Arnold: “Okay! Now it’s perfect!”

Muir: “Yup, yup!”

“Mhm.”

“““Bon appetite.”””

Hiiro used the fork he received in place of a knife and it smoothly cut into the meat. It was incredibility tender. He cut the meat into bite-sized portions and put it into his mouth.

“Oohhh———?!”

—————A tingle passed through his brain!

(It-it’s gone?!)

Yes, the piece of meat in his mouth had melted and disappeared. Still he was by no means unsatisfied. The meat had disappeared but its strong flavour intensely stimulated his taste buds.

(Th-this is———!)

He took another mouthful. And yet another.

(I can’t stop.)

It was as if his body was moving on its own. His whole body was craving for more. The meat was very tender and juice; each mouthful gave the illusion that his mouth was stuffed but it wasn’t stuffed at all. He could still eat more. The taste was emphasised by...

(This sauce.)

The sauce was sweet with a hint of sourness giving the meat a refreshing flavour and stimulated his appetite even further. He could eat this forever. The other two were greedily devouring the meat as well.

The extremely large piece of meat was gone in no time. All three had an entranced expression on their faces. Hiiro never expected that it would give that much of an affect. It was really great that he’d helped Arnold out before.

「なかなか美味しい。やるな、お前」

▶ アノールド・オーシャン

Lv. 31 HP:265/315

MP:148/158

《化装特性》風

《称号》風の友・料理人...

ミュアの保護者で大剣
使いの冒険者

「ああもう、
俺の分もちゃんと残せよう！」

「わたし、ご飯の用意するね！」

▶ ヒイロ・オカムラ

Lv. 23 HP:376/387 MP:915/990

《魔法》文字魔法

(一文字解放・空文字解放)

《称号》巻き込まれた者・

異世界人・文字使い...

異世界に召喚された高校生。
綴った文字のイメージを具現
化する《文字魔法》を使う

▶ ミュア・カストレイア

Lv. 13 HP:89/111 MP:82/82

《称号》奪われた者・我慢の子...

アノールドと旅を共にする少女

金色の
文字使い

勇者四人に
巻き込まれた
ユニークチート

Arnold: "... Fuh, how is the meat, Kid?"

Hihiro closed his eyes and immersed himself in the aftertaste. Then he opened his eyes and let out a warm breath.

"Well done, my servants."

Arnold: "That's right, that's right, that's right. After all, this meat, wait, who are you calling servant!"

"It's just a joke. Don't make a fuss. You'll ruin the mood."

Arnold: "You're the one ruining the mood!"

"Awawawah! D-don't fight! Calm down, Uncle!" With a puzzled look on her face, Muir scolded Arnold. Arnold reluctantly held back.

Arnold: "Hmph, whatever. So, Kid, what's your name?"

"Tell me your name first."

Arnold: "You're really arrogant! Good grief. I'm Arnold Ocean. I'm an adventurer and a cook!"

"A cook? I see. So that's how you knew how to cook that meat."

Arnold: "Yeah, I travelled the world to learn different methods of cooking. Don't you think you're lucky?"

"And that Chibi is?"

"Hey, listen to me!" Arnold retorted then continued to sigh.

Arnold: "This girl is Muir Castlair. I picked her up... On my travels. She's my daughter now."

Hihiro was a little concerned but it wasn't enough for him to ask any questions.

"N-nice to meet you!" Muir constantly peeked at Hihiro but without worrying too much she opened her mouth to speak.

“Oh, there are children lying around in this world.”

Arnold: “As if! They’re not lost property!”

“Is it different?”

Arnold: “It’s different! Some things happened in her village.”

Arnold didn’t want to talk about it. Muir looked down sadly.

(They have their reasons. Well, I’m not really interested though.)

Arnold: “So, what’s your name?”

“Why do I have to give you my name?”

Arnold: “Huh? Come again?”

Arnold was troubled with how to react to Hiiro’s unforeseen replies.

“Just kidding.”

Arnold: “It’s a joke?!”

“I’m Hiiro Okamura. An adventurer... And avid reader.”

Hiiro had thought of giving them an alias but they didn’t seem like bad people so he gave them his real name. He was feeling really good right now so that might have been the number 1 reason why he gave them his name.

Arnold: “What the! The last part’s just your hobby!”

Muir: “... Huhu.”

Arnold: “Oh, Muir’s laughing face is cute after all ~.”

Muir blushed bashfully at being told that. Arnold made a disgustingly charmed expression. Hiiro stared at Arnold with scornful eyes.

“... Are you a pervert into little girls?”

Arnold: "Oi, hold it! I can't let that pass! What'd you say!?"

Muir: "Uuuh... I'm not a... Little girl."

The two of them got angry.

"That's right, that's right! She may not look like it but she's already 12! She can even give birth!"

Arnold proudly boasted with a thumps-up. The little girl next to him glared at him intensely.

Muir: "D-don't say embarrassing things like that!"

Seeing her talk angrily with her cheeks puffed out Hiirō realized something.

"... I've noticed something for a while now, but she's different from what I thought."

He had imagined her to be a quiet child that never got angry and far from being lively. She had been talking cheerfully since the battle had ended with a happy expression on her face.

Arnold: "Mhm? You're talking about Muir? Of course she's acting differently. It's not just my cute Muir, anyone would be hesitant if a villainous food thief with a bad attitude appears."

"Okay, looks like you want to taste my katana?"

"Pfft! If you want to do it, then let's do it! To protect Muir, I'm willing to even eat poop!"

"... That's the end of the line for you, as a human."

Muir was stumped over her mixed feelings. It was obvious that people would be troubled if someone talked like that.

Arnold: "Puh! She's just that important!"

Arnold let out a hearty laugh then Muir spoke.

"Mh-mhm... Thank you for saving me earlier!"

“Mhm? Don’t worry about it. I received something in return.”

Muir listened to Hihiro and let out a sigh of relief at finally being able to thank him. Hihiro could still see a faint tinge of fear in her eyes.

“The sauce you made was also quite delicious.”

Muir: “... Eh? Re-really?”

“If something’s tasty, then I’ll say so. Good job.”

Muir: “Fuh... Aaaaah... Mhm... Thank... You.”

He understood why she was fumbling over her words but he didn’t want to reply any further so he ignored her. Arnold who saw Muir blushing over Hihiro’s compliment, looked somewhat displeased. Arnold was glad that Muir was praised so he kept his mouth shut.

Arnold: “By the way, I’ve got a question for you, Hihiro.”

“I’m not going to tell you a thing about my ability.”

Arnold: “Grr...”

Hihiro had already taken measures expecting that question.

Arnold: “B-but, I’ve never seen magic that could stretch a sword before.”

“It’s not a sword. It’s a katana.”

Arnold: “A katana? Now that you mention it, so that’s a katana? It looks pretty well made.”

“No clue, but it’s pretty easy to handle.”

Arnold: “Mhm ~. So about...”

“I’m not telling you about my magic.”

Arnold: “Why?! Its fine, isn’t it?! I even shared my meat with you!”

“That was compensation for my help. That matter’s been closed.”

Arnold: “Grr...”

Hiiro didn’t want to say anything about his magic.

“Anyway, I’m surprised you care so much about other people.”

Arnold: “Mm? Well, after all, we somehow ended up eating together. Besides, you don’t seem like a bad guy.”

“What makes you think that? I’m human after all. I might attack that 『Beastman』 , Chibi.”

“?!”

Muir instantly turned pale and grasped her hat with both hands and Arnold seized his sword. His face was filled with hostility but Hiiro calmly looked at them.

Arnold: “Wh-what’re you talking about?”

“Your reaction tells me more than enough.”

Arnold’s reaction had proved Hiiro right.

Arnold: “Kuh... How’d you know?”

“... Mmm.”

Hiiro pointed his finger at a certain place. It was———Muir’s bottom.

Arnold: “Ba-bastard! You were looking at Muir with such indecent eyes?!”



There seems to be a huge misunderstanding so Hiiro reluctantly spelt it out for Arnold.

“Look carefully, it’s been moving around the whole time... Her tail, that is.”

“Eh?” Muir exclaimed surprised. She quickly looked behind her and gasped in surprise. Her fluffy silver tail was peeping out from under her skirt.

“H-hey, Muir...” Arnold had frozen up.

Muir: “S-ssooooorrry!”

Her tail which was hidden inside of her clothes had unintentionally popped out due to the delicious meal.

“One of the 『Beastman』’s characteristics is the tail, right? And as for that hat on your head, you’re wearing it to hide your animal ears, the other characteristic of a beastman, right?”

Arnold: “... You’re right, this girl is one of the 『Beastman』. But Muir isn’t... We aren’t doing anything bad! So don’t tell anyone about this!”

Arnold looked at him earnestly. Hiiro just stared at Arnold. Arnold thought that Hiiro was repulsed by beastman. Even while his face was pale, Arnold got ready to draw his sword at any time... But it was pointless.

“Tell other people? Why would I? I don’t care if the Chibi is a human or a beastman. I’m not interested.”

Arnold: “... Huh?”

The two were flabbergasted.

“Even if she’s from a different race, it doesn’t change the fact that she’s a living being, right?”

Arnold: “Y-you...”

“Instead of caring about every little thing, it’s more productive to do other things, like reading books. Aren’t things like books or food more important than caring about

one's race?"

Thinking that Hiiro had said something stupid, Arnold burst out in laughter.

Arnold: "... Ha... Haha... Hahahahaha! You're an interesting guy, Hiiro!"

"Don't laugh while looking at me. I'll stab you."

Hiiro liked laughing at others but he got angry when people laughed at him. Arnold ignored Hiiro and slapped his legs while laughing.

"No, no, I see, I see. So there are guys like you too." Arnold said as he thought of something and turned his bottom towards Hiiro.

"... What're you trying to do?"

Hiiro's face cramped up at having an ass in front of his face. He seriously considered stabbing Arnold once.

Arnold: "Well, just look."

Arnold pulled his shirt up and a tail appeared. Hiiro widened his eyes a bit.

"... You're one too."

Arnold: "Yeah, I, we are 『Beastman』 !"

Listening to their story, it seems that they were on their way to cross the border to return to the 『Beastman』 continent. But this was the 『Human』 continent and given the current state of affairs, if their true identities were to be found out, it would without a doubt, bring forth a disaster.

People were more understanding towards them than the 『Demon-kin』 and wouldn't immediately kill them but they would undeniably attract attention. There were also extremists, Arnold had met many people who loathed beastman. That was why they hid their identities and dressed up like humans.

Hiiro glanced at Arnold's head in search of a certain beastman characteristic. Noticing his gaze Arnold let out a short laugh and asked, "Wondering why I don't have animal

ears?”

Yes, Arnold didn't wear any headgear, yet there were no animal ears. On the contrary his ears looked completely human so Hiiro had thought he was from the 『Human Race』 .

Arnold: “You want to know?”

“Not really.”

Arnold: “I see, I see, if you're that interested I'll tell you.”

“But I wasn't asking?”

Arnold: “Don't be like that. Besides... You too... No, it's a story that involves the 『Human Race』 , after all.”

After saying that Arnold started talking before Hiiro could reply.

Arnold: “You see... My ears were stolen from me.”

“Stolen?”

Arnold: “Oh, because I was a former slave.”

The slavery system. It was a system mainly established for humans to oppress beastman. It was mainly young children who got kidnapped and a crest called 《Magic Lock Crest》 was engraved onto their bodies. The mark prevented them from running away or rebelling. If they attempted to do so, the crest would react to the magic power in their bodies and cause them intense pain.

Back when the beastman had neither a country, strength, status nor political power, many of them were turned into slaves by humans and treated like cattle. Nowadays the slave system was abolished but there was still a black market for it in the form of slave markets.

Arnold was a victim of that and the person who had brought him, had his animal ears ripped out. At the time a bug happened to land on his ears and his ears, the pride of a

beastman, was robbed away just like that.

“I see now.”

Arnold: “I somehow got rid of the 《Magic Lock Crest》 and escaped. By the way, these ears are prosthetic. See, they look real, right?”

The ears certainly looked real. Arnold had said that an acquaintance of his had made it. It was definitely a good decision to hide the fact that they were beastman.

“Is that crest something you can easily remove?”

Arnold: “No, it’s something only the master can erase. But, it automatically disappears when the master dies.”

“Then, Old Man...”

Arnold: “Ah, I couldn’t do anything about it but there was someone who knew how I, no we slaves were treated. So he saved us.”

With the death of his master Arnold finally became free. Hearing this story, Muir became despondent and sorrowful.

Arnold: “Well, after I got my freedom I became a travelling cook! How’s that? Sparkling, aren’t I?”

“I don’t know about sparkling, but I see, you’ve had a very hard life. Normally, it wouldn’t be strange for you to fear humans.”

It was strange that he was talking to Hiiro. Arnold suddenly smiled as if it was full of derision.

Arnold: “Let bygones be bygones. Let’s not forget that it was a human who saved me.”

“If it was me, I’d definitely get revenge through various methods...” A dark aura flowed out from behind Hiiro.

“Yo-you’re pretty scary... Huhun, anyway, I’m happy right now, so it’s fine.” Arnold said while petting Muir’s head. She narrowed her eyes looking pleased.

Arnold: "Which reminds me, why are you in a place like this, Hihiro? Are you on some kind of a quest?"

"I have no obligation to-."

"Enough with that. You can at least tell me that much, right?"

There was no harm in telling them his reason but he also didn't have a reason to talk to them about it. It was merely Arnold's curiosity. But it wasn't just Arnold, Muir also wanted to hear the answer and stared attentively at Hihiro. It was silent for a while then Hihiro sighed, losing to their persistence.

"... Hah, my purpose is..."

"... To cross the border."

Arnold: "... Eh? Y-you mean...?"

"Yeah, just like you two."

Arnold: "Why!? Why's a human like you going to the beastman continent?!"

"Hah? Obviously because I want to go there."

Arnold: "... Come again?"

"I don't care about the current situation. I'm not interested. I do as I please. If someone stands in my way, I'll kill them."

The silence continues.

"... Pfft." Arnold burst into laughter. He looked at Hihiro and laughed again, so a vein popped up on Hihiro's forehead.

"Is something wrong, Pervert?"

Arnold: "Is that title a given now?!"

“Anyway, I’m just doing the same thing as you guys.”

Arnold suddenly said with a serious voice, “It isn’t a field trip. The 『Beastman』 are currently using all their resources to prepare for battle. If they spot a human, it won’t end well.”

“Fine by me, I’ll turn the tables on them.”

Arnold: “... Are you serious?”

“Naturally. I’ve no reason to run away.”

Arnold: “The beastman are strong.”

“But I’m stronger.”

Since he had 《Word Magic》, he believed it would somehow work out.

Arnold: “Hoh, I can’t believe you. I’m getting more and more interested in you.”

“Stop it. You’re giving me the shivers. I don’t swing that way.”

Arnold yelled in frustration since Hihiro responded indifferently to him even though he was trying to have a serious conversation with Hihiro.

Muir laughed watching their exchange. Hihiro was curious so he asked her,

“Mhm? What’s so funny?”

Muir: “Ah, I’m sorry!”

“No, I’m just asking...”

Muir: “Ah... Mm... I, I think that Hihiro is... A good person.”

(I’m a good person?) There was almost no one who would say such a thing. Hihiro never thought that anyone would say that he was a good person so he was somewhat disgusted.

Arnold: “Hey, hey, Muir, what’s so good about him? Aren’t you mistaken? He’s a bad

guy, right?"

"Th-that's not true! Hihiro saved me, and... Any-anyway he's a good person!" Muir said bossily and Arnold went silent while sulking.

"Well, I don't care whether I'm a good person or not. More importantly, are you going to take off that hat?"

"... Eh?" Muir was surprised by the sudden request and became troubled. Hihiro wanted to see animal ears as well, not just the tail. After all, he finally came to a different world.

"It's not possible?"

Muir: "Um... Ah... Yes, sure..."

She looked embarrassingly at Hihiro with upturned eyes and took off her hat. Something was slowly revealed from under the hat.

"Hoh, hoh, I see."

Muir: "U-uuu... This is embarrassing..."

On top of her head were animal ears like the ones seen in anime or manga. The ears were pretty cute and currently twitching. Hihiro felt satisfied, it was a good sign that he was able to meet beastmen this soon after coming to this world.

Hihiro wanted to carefully observe and touch the ears and tail but since it was their first time meeting, he didn't think it was a very good idea. She was also a little girl of the opposite sex so he endured.

"It's fine already. Thank you."

Muir: "Ah, Y-yes."

Muir was still blushing and when she put on her hat, she pulled it all the way down to her face to hide. It seemed that it was pretty embarrassing. Arnold let out an unsatisfied groan seeing Muir look like that. The mood between Hihiro and Muir was difficult to interrupt but a body slid in between them.

“What is it, Old Man?”

Arnold: “No-nope ~. Nothing really.”

“You’re just playing dumb.”

No one would think that nothing was up if they saw how badly Arnold was whistling after he suddenly slid himself between the two.

Arnold: “An-anyway, it’s fate that we meet here. We’re heading to the same place, let’s go together. I’ll lead the way.”

“Stop messing around. What nonsense is that? I’m just fine by...” Hiiro said while looking pensive.

Since Hiiro had suddenly become silent, Arnold asked him, “Wh-what’s wrong?”

“... You meant to say: Please come with us. Right?”

Arnold: “Grr... I swear... This Brat...”

Arnold glared at Hiiro while grinding his teeth, but it quickly changed into a sigh.

Arnold: “Hah ~, I can’t win against you with words. Fine, we’ll come with you.”

“Do what you want.”

Hiiro had originally planned to act alone but this was a good opportunity to learn about beastman. It was certainly better to have some background knowledge before entering the beastman continent. Therefore he allowed them to accompany him.

“Ah, before I forget.” Arnold suddenly glared at Hiiro with a threatening look.

“What is it?”

Arnold: “Just a warning.”

“So, what is it?”

Arnold: “... Don’t think about laying your hands on Muir.”

“I’m normal, you Pervert.”

Arnold: “Don’t screw with me! I’m super normal, Idiot!”

“Mhm? That’s a first. I’m not interested in little girls, but I was sure you were, aren’t you?”

Arnold: “Ok, Ok, Okay ~. Let’s take this outside, you worthless Brat!”

“We’re already outside, Lolicon.”

Arnold: “Don’t call me thhhhaat!”

Muir wearily shrugged her shoulders while watching their unchanged dialogue and whispered in a voice so quiet that no one heard it.

Muir: “I’m not a little girl.”

Obviously, no one heard what she had said.

“Hey, Hihiro, I saw you battle earlier, but what level are you?” Arnold questioned him as they passed through 【Torchu Mountain Range】 .

“Why’re you asking that?”

Arnold: “Well, you were using weird magic, but I was thinking that you seemed pretty amateurish.”

“Why do you think that?”

Arnold: “You’re certainly from the 『Human Race』 , but your physical ability is strangely high. Your killing intent is pretty good for a kid, but you seem to lack battle experience.”

“ ... ”

Arnold: “So even if you’re strong, you lack the battle experience. I can’t help but think that your level must be low.”

Hihiro admired Arnold’s observation skills. Not much time had passed since he’d been

summoned to this world, 【Edea】 . He had done various quests and faced many monsters. But it probably didn't seem like much to an experienced adventurer.

Arnold was firmly able to grasp Hihiro's battle capabilities just from observing the previous fight so his observation skills were pretty astonishing.

"Well, whether my level is low or high, it's got nothing to do with you, right? You just want to know if I'm strong or weak."

Arnold: "Hey, we'll be travelling together from now on. We might have to co-operate during battle. So, wouldn't it be more convenient to know each other's level?"

Hihiro stared at Arnold, it didn't seem like Arnold was lying and he made a sound argument.

"Be reasonable."

Arnold: "So..."

"What about you, Old Man?"

Arnold: "What?"

"What level are you, Old Man?"

"Oh, me? I'm level 31." Arnold looked at Hihiro and smoothly answered without hesitation.

(... Should I make sure?)

Hihiro concentrated magical power into his index finger and as not to be seen, quickly wrote a character.

(I can check with this character, right?)

『Peek 司見』

This made it possible to peek into the minds of other people and their 《Status》 . Hihiro wanted to ascertain that what Arnold had said was the truth.

Arnold Ocean

Lv 31

HP: 305/315

MP: 158/158

EXP: 46879

NEXT: 5250

ATK: 334 (378)

DEF: 299 (315)

AGI: 278 (283)

HIT: 206 (208)

INT: 95 (96)

《Trick Art Attribute》

Wind

《Trick Art》

Fang of the Wind • Explosive Wind Claw • Blast Inversion

《Titles》

Friend of the Wind • Former Slave • Chef • Doting Father • Man of the Burning Soul • The Man Referred to as a Pervert

Muir Castliar

Lv 13

HP: 107/111

MP: 82/82

EXP: 2655

NEXT: 533

ATK: 102 (105)

DEF: 100 (108)

AGI: 99 (102)

HIT: 77 (78)

INT: 54 (55)

《Trick Art Attribute》

《Trick Art》

《Titles》

Kidnapped • My Angel • Cutie Flower • Girl of Tolerance

Arnold had proven that he hadn't lied, Hiiro had verified that with 『Peek 覗』. So far, there was nothing for Hiiro to be curious about. Hiiro confirmed that Arnold was level 31 and that Muir was level 13. One of Arnold's title's made Hiiro laugh.

Hiiro was curious about the 《Trick Art》 in their 《Status》. Normally magic was written there but that seemed to be different for beastman.

(I didn't feel any magic power in the technique he used before, so that was an Art, huh... I see.)

If he had time later, he'd like to investigate more on 《Trick Art》.

"... I'm level 23."

Arnold had answered him honestly so he saw no reason to lie. He had concluded that there were no hindrances to telling them his level.

This time he had also confirmed that Arnold was an idiot and a soft-hearted overall good guy.

Hiiro was a sceptical person but he understood that they didn't want to deceive him.

(Well, it's impossible to completely trust them, but it might be interesting to travel with them for a while.) While he was thinking that...

Arnold: "Allriiightt! I was better after all! I wiiiiiiin!"

Like a child, Arnold made a gusty pose while feeling happy even though he had already reached that age. It was a little annoying how he was looking at Hiiro with a triumphant look.

“Hmm, levels not everything, right? What’re you so happy for, Pervert?”

Arnold: “Don’t call me a pervert! You don’t want to admit defeat?”

“... What was that?”

Arnold: “Ahahahaha.”

Muir didn’t know what to do since they were glaring at each other.

“You want to test me?”

Arnold: “Oh, that’ll be interesting! I’ll show you the strength of an adult! Let’s do it!”



[Muir]

Muir thought their quarrel was starting to go beyond that.

(An-anyway, I have to do something!)

She began running enthusiastically with that thought in mind. Arnold gasped as soon as he saw that and called out her name and she suddenly stopped running.

Muir: “Hu-hurry up, Uncle! The village should just be on the other side!”

Arnold: “Ah, okay.”

Muir: “Let’s go! I’m hungry!”

Arnold watched as she ran off again and he couldn’t just let her go by herself.

Arnold: “Argh, Hihiro! Let’s continue this next time!”

“Don’t be ashamed, Old Man.”

Arnold: “That’s you, right? Idiot.”

Muir watched them arguing back and forth but was relieved that they were following

her.

(O-okay, that's good ~... You can't fight, Uncle, Hiiro too!)

She puffed out her cheeks in anger but it wasn't scary at all since it was amusing. On the contrary most people would find it cute.

Muir nodded, feeling satisfied at preventing a fight from breaking out with her quick wittedness. Muir, who acted as the mediator, kept running until the two cooled down their heads.

CHAPTER 4

BEAST CAGE

[Arnold]

Hihiro and his travelling companions, Arnold and Muir, were on their way towards the border city 【Surge】. Along the way they decided to stop at 【Wondo】 for the night.

The atmosphere in Wondo was a bit strange. The town looked as if a typhoon had just passed by. All the buildings were destroyed and the villagers were standing around muttering to each other. Arnold went to ask one of the villagers what had happened.

“A beastman went wild around here.” When he heard those words, Arnold’s shoulders began to quiver.

Arnold: “He-hey, why’d the beastman go wild?”

Arnold attempted to gain more information while trying to remain calm.

Villager: “It seems that the beastman was an adventurer and would drop by 【Wondo】 every now and then. Today as well, the beastman came to our village. Then suddenly three big wagons entered the village.”

Arnold’s face began to grow pale as soon as he heard the word, wagon.

Arnold: “Wh-what kind of people came out of that wagon?”

Villager: “Ah, now that I think of it, they were wearing some weird clothes.”

Arnold’s face grew paler and paler as he listened to the story the villager told. Hihiro and Muir weren’t aware of Arnold’s condition as they had been standing a bit further away.

“I, I see...” Arnold replied with some effort.

Villager: “Those guys told the beastman to obediently obey while they detained him.

Of course, the beastman refused them and that was when they attacked him.”

After that there was a battle between the guys who came out of the wagon and the beastman. Being an adventurer as well as a beastman with high physical abilities, he was strong so the battle grew increasingly violent.

By looking at the state of this village, it was obvious how violent the battle had been. The roof of the houses had been blown off, the well was destroyed and the fields were damaged. It really did look like a typhoon had just passed by.

Villager: “It’s quite annoying, no, not because of the beastman. Of course, the beastman who fought inside of this village is also at fault. But, the ones most at fault are the ones who forced the strong beastman to fight.”

The villager became angry every time he remembered how their village was destroyed. From what the villager was saying, it was clear to Arnold that those guys had done something unreasonable.

Arnold: “What... Happened to that beastman?”

“Ah... Well, yeah. It’s hard to say...” The villager hesitantly said.

Arnold: “Was he kidnapped?”

The answer to that question was the completely opposite of what Arnold had thought.

Villager: “... No, he’s still here.”

“Re-really?! That’s great!” Arnold said earnestly. Arnold was delighted that for whatever reason the beastman had not been kidnapped and was still in this village. There was no way for Arnold, who was a beastman himself, to be happy about another beastman getting kidnapped.

Arnold: “Ah, can I meet him?”

By all means, Arnold wanted to exchange information with the beastman. The villager’s face dimmed upon Arnold’s words.

Villager: “... Yes, well you can meet him.”

Arnold was concerned about the tone that the villager had used and frowned.

Arnold: "Th-then I would like to meet him."

Villager: "... It's over here."

The villager reluctantly led Arnold to the beastman.

"Hey, I'm going out for a bit so go wait at the inn!" Arnold called out.

Hiiro gently shrugged his shoulders and left to go to the inn. However Muir unsteadily ran towards Arnold.

Arnold: "Hey Muir. You go with Hiiro..."

The two followed after the villager.

Arnold was astonished at the sight in front of him and he went stiff.

"This is... Him." The villager pointed to the beastman's grave.

Arnold: "Th-this is..."

Villager: "He's already at a place beyond our control."

Muir hadn't heard the story earlier so she didn't understand the situation. But judging from Arnold's mood she understood that a sad event had occurred.

Muir: "... Uncle?"

Arnold: "... Muir."

Arnold looked at Muir painfully. Seeing Arnold close to tears, Muir felt like she had lost her foothold and she started to feel anxious.

"He didn't feel much pain when he passed away. He might have even been happy." The villager said indifferently, as if it had been someone else's problem. No, it had been someone else's problem but for some reason Arnold didn't want to hear those words

coming from a human's mouth right now.

(Damn... It's so irritating! Something like this has happened before, hasn't it!?)

The villagers weren't at fault. He knew who was at fault. Even so the only one who understood the feelings of the beastman, who laid here, was Arnold who was a beastman himself.

Arnold stared at the poorly made grave, made a cross sign with some wooden sticks and placed it onto the ground.

(How can they do such horrible things...? Like that time with me... And like that time with this girl...)

Arnold placed a hand on Muir's head and clenched his jaw. Muir felt his hands slightly shaking on top of her head. She gently grabbed onto his clothes and moved closer to him.

Arnold: "Muir..."

Muir's feelings had reached Arnold and he slightly unclenched his jaw.

Arnold: "Thank you."

Arnold affectionately patted Muir's head and feeling good, she closed her eyes.

Drip. Drip. Drip. Drip

It started to rain. Arnold looked up at the sky and then returned his gaze back onto the grave.

(It was unreasonable, right...? It must have been frustrating, right...? This rain must be you crying.)

Arnold gently touched the wooden stick that he had placed down as if it could break at any minute.

(I can't say that I'll get revenge, but rest peacefully.)

Seeing Arnold with both his hands grasped together, Muir also did the same. After he

had finished, Arnold slowly turned to face the villager.

“Hey, can I ask you something?”

“What is it?”

“The guys who came to this village on the wagon, what are they called?”

“Ah, I’m sure they were called...”

Arnold had already knew what the villager would say so he had prepared himself. But Muir who didn’t suspect a thing, had a startled expression.

“They were called, 《Beast Cage》 !”



[Hiiro]

Hiiro Okamura was relaxing on the bed at the inn when Arnold and Muir finally returned. They both had serious looks on their faces but it seemed like they didn’t want to talk about what was bothering them so Hiiro didn’t ask.

Since it was raining he couldn’t go outside. So he borrowed a book from the inn and was currently reading it. The room had been completely silent for a long time. And suddenly...

“Aaarrrrrrrgggggh!” Arnold shouted as if he was broken. Muir was surprised by the yell. Hiiro was also surprised and reflexively dropped his book.

Arnold: “Argh, enough! There’s nothing I can do by sitting around being gloomy! Or should I say, this isn’t like me! Muir, Hiiro! Let’s go eat!”

Arnold was worried about something but he couldn’t sit around feeling hesitant about it. So he yelled loudly to cheer himself up.

“I don’t care about that, don’t yell so suddenly. I was just about to call the doctor and tell him that you’d gone mad.”

Arnold: "Your hateful mouth sounds so refreshing right now."

"... Seriously?"

Arnold: "Shut up! Anyway, let's go eat! Hey, Muir!"

"Um, ah, yes!" Muir replied cheerfully. She was also depressed but seeing how Arnold's spirits had lifted, she couldn't remain depressed forever.

"That's fine, but is there even a restaurant in this village?"

Arnold: "There is if you look, right? If there isn't, we can just ask the inn to whip something up!"

"It's not even dinner time yet?"

Arnold: "If you pay, they'll do it!"

"... Will you be paying, Old Man?"

Arnold: "No, nope, pay for yourself! Ah, no, I was the one who invited you. It can't be helped, today's my treat!"

"Then I'll go." Hiiro put his book to one side.

Arnold: "Wh-what a self-interested guy."

"I'll take whatever's given to me. There's no reason that I shouldn't."

Arnold: "Haha, that's so like you."

According to the innkeeper there was one restaurant in this village so the three of them headed there.

It was a small restaurant but the food was fairly delicious. The restaurant served good portioned dishes even though it was very cheap.

Muir was happy so she stuffed her mouth with food. Hiiro thought that for someone with such a small body like Muir, she sure ate a lot. Arnold also ate a lot. It seems that beastman are gluttons. Hiiro gained a bit of knowledge from seeing a new side of the

two.



[Muir]

The three of them returned to the inn feeling satisfied and confirmed their future destination.

“So we’re heading towards the border?”

Arnold: “Yeah, you’re also heading there right, Hiiro? That’s why we’re travelling together after all.”

Muir silently listened to their conversation.

“Are we heading there right away?”

Arnold: “Mhm ~ I’m not in too much of a hurry. But there is something troublesome I’m concerned about.”

Even though Arnold had whispered the word, “troublesome” Muir had heard it. She knew that Hiiro had heard it too. But she didn’t bring it up because Hiiro hadn’t said anything.

(Does Uncle not trust Hiiro...?) Muir thought. If it was important, then Arnold would bring it up so Muir kept silent.

Arnold: “Well, let’s continue at the usual pace. If something comes up, we’ll cross that bridge when we get there.”

“Well, aren’t you optimistic?”

Arnold: “My principle is to always take it easy.”

“But when it comes to that Chibi?”

Arnold: “I’ll do whatever it takes!”

“Oh... Uncle.” Muir said in shock but she looked happy.

“Idiot Parent, Pervert, Brute, Lolicon?”

Arnold: “That’s too long! Stop it with the idiot parent! And we already agreed that I’m not a lolicon!”

“A-ah, you’re mean, Hihiro-san! I’m not a little girl!” Muir said angrily while puffing out her cheeks. But her words didn’t reach Hihiro.

“Well, you don’t look twelve.”

Muir: “Uuu~...”

Muir had a complex about her body growth and couldn’t refute Hihiro’s words; so she held a pillow in both hands and groaned into it.

Arnold: “Oho! You were really cute just now, Muir!”

Muir: “Eh, ah, um-umm, was I really...cute?”

Muir was embarrassed by Arnold’s words and glanced at Hihiro.

“Fuh~.”

Muir dropped her shoulders and collapsed, seeing that Hihiro was yawning and not paying attention to her at all.

(Muu~ I don’t understand.)

Muir couldn’t understand why she cared so much about Hihiro’s attitude. She became a little sullen that Hihiro wasn’t interested in her at all.

The next day, they set out on their journey again under the clear weather.



[Hiiro]

Before leaving the village, they searched for a guild to exchange their monster materials but they didn't find any. Apparently this village didn't have a guild.

The bag was filled to the brim with monster materials and Hiiro wondered what was inside. Usually, one would trade the monster materials for money at the guild but when there were none, it was done at shops.

"We're not short on money, right? Why don't you just throw it away?"

Arnold: "Hey Hiiro, I can't do something so wasteful! These are mostly 《Frog Bee Needles》, they're more expensive than you think."

Arnold lifted the bag and showed it to Hiiro. Since Hiiro wasn't obsessed with money, he didn't think he needed to earn more than necessary. Arnold's next words change Hiiro's mind.

Arnold: "Well, if we have money, we can buy the rare food ingredients and books that you love so much."

Hiiro started frantically looking around for a store to sell the materials after hearing Arnold's words.

Arnold: "... What's wrong, Hiiro?"

"What're you loitering around for? Go find someone to exchange that with!"

Arnold: "... Okay?"

Hiiro ignored Arnold, who was staring at him blankly and entered the store.

Muir: "... Let's go, Uncle."

Arnold: "Y-yeah."

He reluctantly nodded to Muir and entered the store. There was a large man inside

arguing with the store owner.

“What do you mean you don’t sell it here?”

“Even if you say that, Sir. If I don’t have it, I can’t sell it to you.”

“But, this is a general store, right? You should carry things like 《Frog Bee Needles》.”

The man visited the store in search of something. He had his head down and was disheartened when he found out that the store didn’t sell what he wanted. Muir who had heard the story spoke in a small voice,

“Un-uncle, if it’s 《Frog Bee Needles》 then... We have some?”

The man who seemed to have sharp ears, heard what Muir had said and rudely appeared in front of her.

“Is that true, Miss?!”

Muir: “Mm, Ah, umm... Auuu...”

It was natural for Muir to be frightened as the man was a skinhead and had a very grim face. Arnold stood in front of Muir and glared at the man.

“Oh? I’m sorry about getting over-excited just now.”

The man immediately apologized after seeing how frightened Muir had become so Arnold stopped glaring at him.

Arnold: “Well, that’s fine. You said you wanted 《Frog Bee Needles》, right?”

It was lucky that the man had met them, since they had the materials. It seems that the man wanted the materials no matter what.

His daughter seems to have been bitten by a poisonous bug and he could heal her with the needles. Arnold wasn’t heartless enough to remain silent after hearing such a story.

The man handed Arnold the money and was very pleased. Hiiro was glad that the man also brought the other materials as a thank you.

“Thank you! Now my wife and daughter will be happy!”

“Well, that’s good.”

“Oh, I’m Raab! Let’s drink together next time we meet!” The man said before running somewhere at full speed. Hiiro looked at the back of the running man and thought,

(He’s just like a typhoon. That skinhead...)

Hiiro and the others watched the man and since they were able to exchange the materials for money, they had nothing else to say.

Hiiro had been adventuring with Arnold for several days but since they were running out of provisions, they decided to stop at the nearby town, 【Palestos】 .

As soon as they entered the town, Arnold began looking around restlessly as if he was looking for something.

“They’re not here...” Arnold muttered and stroked his chest in relief.

“What’re you doing?”

“Ah, no, it’s nothing.” Arnold said with a fake smile. Muir was also looking around restlessly, there was something that only the two of them knew. Hiiro didn’t particularly want to hear any more so he didn’t ask any other questions.

A few wagons passed by. They walked towards the plaza and the wagons that had passed them earlier were parked there.

White-robed men came out in succession from the wagon. The residents of the town stared dubiously at the wagon, wondering what was going on.

Hiiro was acting the same. Hiiro suddenly saw that Arnold and Muir had turned pale and he was about to inquire about the reason when he heard Arnold muttering to

himself.

Arnold: "... Why even at a place like this..."

Arnold grinded his teeth in frustrated. Muir also huddled towards Arnold as if to hide herself. Fortunately, many people were gathered around the plaza so Arnold's prediction seemed to pass but...

Arnold: "Hey, Hihiro. Let's get out of here right-."

"Don't move!" While Arnold was whispering in Hihiro's ear, one of the men wearing the white robes shouted. The man wasn't speaking to anyone in particular, he was talking to everyone that was gathered at the plaza.

White-robe: "Starting from now, anyone who moves will be searched first."

Hihiro knitted his eyebrows together looking displeased at the arrogant man. Hihiro thought about doing something regarding the situation but Arnold lightly tugged his clothes.

Arnold: "Hihiro. Don't move."

"...?"

While thinking about why he should listen to such orders, Hihiro saw that Arnold's face had paled so he knew the order had a reason behind it.

Arnold and Muir seemed to be frightened of something.

Hihiro tried to ask Arnold the question lingering in his mind since it was uncomfortable to leave it unanswered.

White-robe: "There is a 『Beastman』 in this town! We came all this way to catch it!"

Hihiro grasped the situation from those words. He could understand from the ambience that these guys were disreputable. Hihiro understood from experience that these guys hated 『Beastman』 .

That was why Arnold and Muir were hiding themselves so that their identities wouldn't get exposed. The other party seemed convinced that there was a 『Beastman』 in this town.

(Did they already find out about Muir and the Old Man...?)

Hiiro thought the smart thing to do was to run away from this place rather than hide. But Arnold and Muir weren't moving.

He couldn't do anything about the two since they were frightened so he looked at the white-robed men once again. On the back of the white robes was a drawing of a wolf-like silhouette with an X mark hashed over it.

(A wolf with an X? No... I see. It's not a wolf, it's 『Beastman』 with an X.)

The wolf silhouette represented the 『Beastman』 and the X on top of that meant that the group didn't recognize the existence of beastman.

The white-robed men started to look around for beastman. Hiiro looked to his side to see Arnold sweating from his forehead and Muir clinging to Arnold with her eyes tightly shut.

He calmly looked at the wagon and paid attention to the things that were stacked at the back.

(Are those... Books?)

There were five or six books there in varying sizes. The books must be old as they looked as if they had been used quite a bit. For the book-loving Hiiro, it was something that he would like to read through.

『Inspect 視』

It was unbelievable that an ordinary person like Hiiro could use such magic but he stopped at nothing to fulfil his desire.

He could lightly investigate the book covers using 『Inspect 視』 ; this character allowed him to see far away as if looking through a telescope.

Hiiro swallowed his saliva when he saw what was written on the books.

『Gourmet's Travelling Journal ~ How to Walk Through the Continent ~ ①』

Hiiro's body trembled. He had to read that book by any means possible. Since ① was written on the book cover, he also looked over the other books and just like he had thought, there was a sequel. Furthermore he also saw a book called 『Magic Structure』 in the pile and he was intrigued.

Hiiro glanced at the last book but he was only able to read some of the title since one of the white-robed men moved and stood in front of the book.

(... I can't check the title like this. I really want to know what it is.)

Hiiro couldn't make any bad moves so he pondered over how he could read the title but he couldn't come up with an answer.

The white-robed men searched each person one by one. They took extra care when searching people who were wearing hats or loose clothing as they could be hiding their animal ears or tail underneath.

Most 『Beastman』 looked exactly like humans and the only difference was that they had animal ears and tails. It was very easy for beastman to hide those features so it was very hard to differentiate between them and humans. Although rare, there were also beastman who had both human and animal ears called 《Four Ears》.

The white-robed men turned their line of sight at Hiiro and co and started walking towards them. Hiiro could see that Arnold and Muir were anxious and he swore that he could almost hear the sounds of their heartbeat.

It had nothing to do with Hiiro so he remained calm as always but the same could not be said for Arnold and Muir. The men were still heading towards them.

Arnold clenched his teeth, slowly put his hand onto his sword and prepared himself for the worse. Arnold thought about going wild in the plaza but then two people caught his attention. They looked like a parent and child pair; both were wearing hats

and showed the same suspicious behaviour as Arnold.

(It can't be...) Arnold thought.

Thud. Thud!

The sounds of a person running could be heard. That person skilfully slipped passed the white-robed men.

"Hey, I'm running away!"

The child who ran away from the plaza was wearing a hat and looked to be around the age of a primary school student.

White-robe: "It's that one! Catch it!"

The child desperately tried to escape but unfortunately there were just too many opponents. In the blink of an eye her path was blocked off and she was caught.

White-robe: "I won't let you escape!"

Child: "Le-let me go!"

The child struggled and hit the man's arm. While she was struggling her hat fell off her head and it became evident that she wasn't from the 『Human Race』. On top of her head sat a pair of animal ears, the symbol of the 『Beastman』.

"She's a 『Beastman』!"

"Hey, don't let her escape!" The white-robed men exchanged words.

"Hey! Let me go!"

"Stop struggling!"

"She's struggling, that Brat! Huh, this!?"

"Hey, if you're having trouble just stupefy her." As soon as one of the men said those words, someone appeared in front of the white-robed men.

“I beg of you! Please let her go!” A woman wearing a hat appealed while kneeling on the ground with her head down.

“Who are you?!” One of the white-robed men asked with a sharp gaze.

“Mu-mum! I told you to run away!” The child cried out. She was a girl judging from her voice and expression. The girl wanted to give her mother a chance to escape by attracting the attention of the white-robed men. But she had failed. Her mother wasn’t the type of person who used their daughter as a sacrifice while they escaped.

Hiiro had also seen those two earlier and like he had thought they were a parent and child duo.

White-robe: “Mum? Oi, take off your hat!”

The hat was taken off the mother and there sat a splendid pair of animal ears, just like the little girl.

White-robe: “According to the report there were two beastman. It’s these two. Alright, let’s bring them along!”

The mother and daughter were forcibly dragged into the wagon. The people around the plaza were stunned that two 『Beastman』 were captured.

Despair overcame the mother and daughter and they looked as if they were walking to their deaths. Feeling pity for the pair one of the citizens spoke up,

“Hey! What did the mother and daughter do wrong? That child’s still just a kid, you know?”

The white-robed men stopped moving upon those words. One of them moved towards the citizen who had spoken up.

“Arghh?!”

The white-robed man grabbed onto the citizen’s collar and raised him up into the air with one hand. Then he said unpleasantly in a threatening voice,

White-robe: “You shouldn’t say anything else. I won’t kill you if you do, but I can cause

you pain.”

“Uh... Ah... Wah... I get it...” With his neck constricted, the citizen barely managed to squeeze out his words as he grimaced in pain.

The white-robed man threw the citizen onto the ground, glanced at him with cold eyes then turned to return to the wagon.

The other citizens around them wanted to protest against the violence of the man but no one was willing to speak up. They were all afraid of ending up like the citizen from before.

Since the white-robed men had already found what they were looking for, they didn’t notice Arnold or Muir and the two let out a sigh of relief. But then an unexpected incident occurred.

“Ehh ~, this girl has a tail ~. That’s weird~!” A voice spoke out, not so far from Hiiro. He turned around to look and saw a child pointing at Muir.

Hiiro’s gaze landed on Muir. No, to be more exact, it landed on Muir’s tail. Muir was so tense that she had put excess strength into her tail and it came out from underneath her clothes. Unluckily, a nearby child had seen her tail and pointed her out.

Arnold instantly paled and turned around to look at the centre of the plaza. There he saw the white-robed men who had got into the wagon, ready to leave, look towards them.

“You over there! Don’t move!”

Arnold immediately carried Muir in his arms and was ready to flee. However the street was blocked with people.

The white-robed men who were waiting around the plaza proceeded towards Arnold as if ready for a pincer attack. Muir quickly tried to hide her tail but it was already too late, the white-robed men were already advancing towards them.

Muir: “I, I’m sorry, Uncle... I’m sorry!”

Arnold: “It’s not your fault! We should escape from here!”

The surrounding enemy was already approaching them. Helplessly, Arnold drew the great sword from his back.

Arnold: "Don't leave my side, Muir!"

Muir: "Ye-yes!"

"You guys go examine that person... No wait, it's already obvious since that person drew his sword." One of the white-robed men said while smiling and also drew his sword from his hip. The other white-robed men did the same.

Hiiro pondered over what to do. He had begun travelling with the two under strange circumstances and it didn't go any further than that. But it was also a waste to lose such a great source of information here.

(But there's a lot of them...)

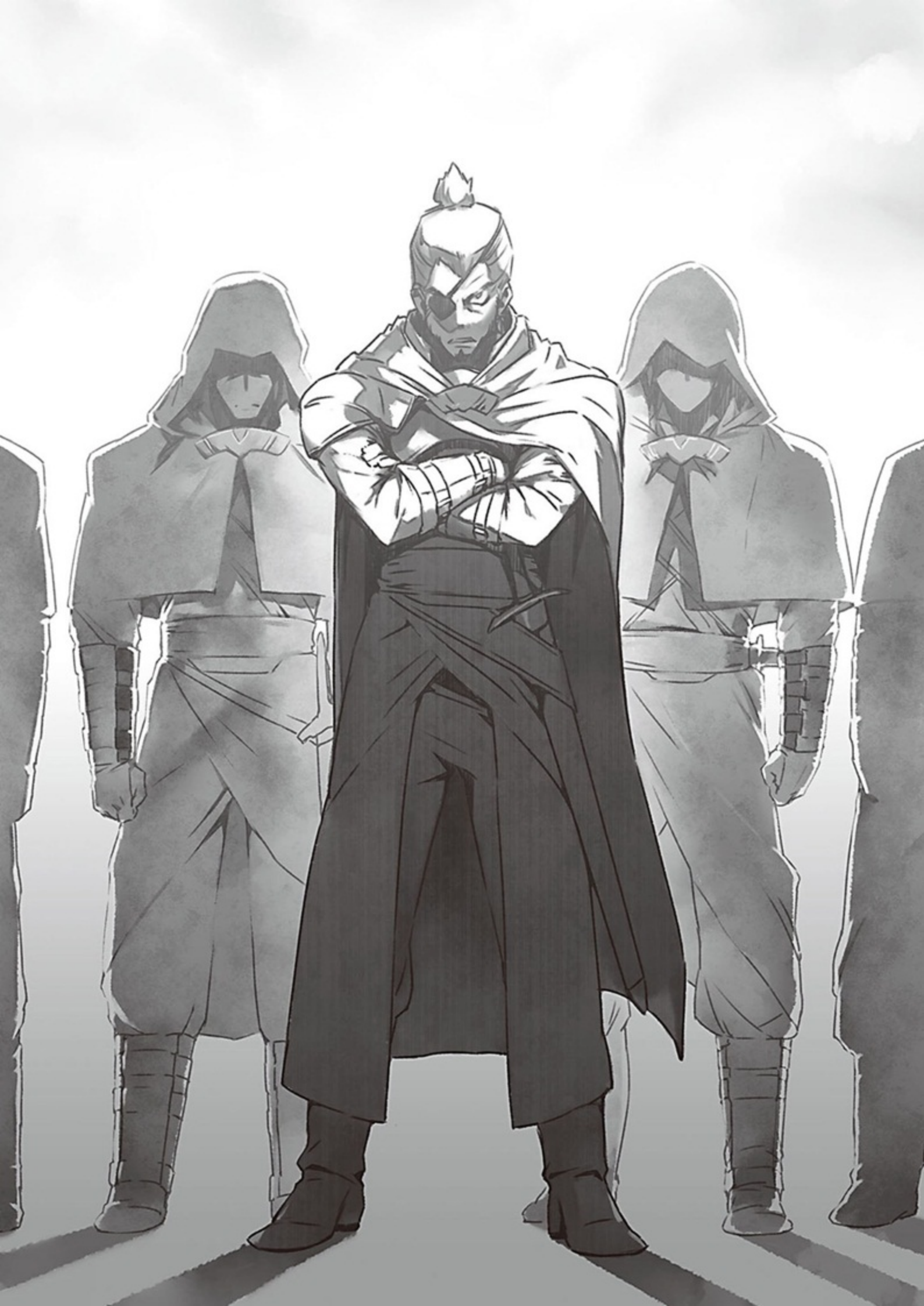
Hiiro tried counting the white-robed men with just his eyes. Since Hiiro had been fighting monsters, he was now accustomed to fighting. Nevertheless his level still wasn't that high.

Even if Hiiro used 《Word Magic》, it took time to write the characters. Since there was an overwhelming number of opponents, it would be difficult for Hiiro to provide Arnold with any assistance.

Besides there was one person amongst the white-robed men that had a different atmosphere. It was the person who had been giving out orders, and that person was now approaching Arnold and Muir.

He was a man in his 30s with a beard and a scary face. He was a handsome dandy man with sharp eyes. He looked like those villains that would appear in the middle of movies.

The man wore a black eye-patch over his right eye and his special trait seemed to be the samurai topknot on his head. Hiiro pondered over whether to call him Eye-patch Bastard or Topknot. Hiiro decided to stick with Topknot since it suited the man perfectly.



Hihiro knew that the man wasn't ordinary by his appearance but he could also feel it as well. If this was a one-on-one fight, Hihiro would be able to somehow manage with his magic. But it was just suicide against this number of opponents.

Hihiro clicked his tongue and didn't move from his spot. Arnold probably thought the same as Hihiro since he remained vigilant while staring at the man.

Arnold: "Argh..."

Topknot: "Hoh, we can kill you here, but the only one we have business with is that beastman over there. It doesn't seem like you're a beastman."

Arnold certainly looked human, since he didn't have any animal ears.

Topknot: "It isn't good to protect the beastman."

Arnold: "Eh! You're being so narrow-minded!"

Topknot: "... What?"

Arnold: "What're you saying?! Whether you're a beastman or a human, all that matters is that you're living!"

Topknot: "... It matters."

Arnold: "What?!"

Topknot: "At least on this continent, 『Beastman』 are just as detestable as the 『Demonkin』."

Arnold: "..."

Topknot: "Their very existence is disgusting."

Arnold: "Th... That..."

Arnold: "The fact that they exist in this place makes me want to vomit."

"You've rambled for too looooong!" Arnold snapped and swung his sword straight at the man.

STRIIIIKE

The man also drew his sword and easily blocked Arnold's attack.

Arnold: "Argh!"

Topknot: "What incredible power!"

Arnold had put more force into the sword than expected and the man was surprised.

"Kyyaaaaaah!" Muir's distressed voice resounded throughout the plaza. Arnold gasped and immediately turned around, there he saw Muir being captured by the enemy.

The man tore the hat off Muir's head and her animal ears were exposed. The citizens started to make a ruckus. Topknot looked towards Muir and muttered, "So she was a beast."

Arnold: "Muuuuiir!"

Thwack

"Urgh?!" Arnold received an impact from behind and dropped his sword; the sword fell to the ground with a clang. The man sheathed his sword, looked down at Arnold and said,

"You shouldn't throw away your life. Since you're a human."

Arnold: "Urgh..."

Topknot: "Take her with us."

"N-noo! Uncle! Unncclee!" Muir screamed and cried while being taken away. Hiirō still couldn't make any moves yet so he just closely watched the scene.

Arnold's conscious began to fade and the last thing he saw was his beloved daughter getting forced into the wagon.

Arnold: "Muir... Damn it... Damn... It..."

Arnold: "Arg... Argh..."

When Hiiro saw that Arnold had finally regained conscious he sighed and said,

“Are you up?”

Arnold: “... Where is this...?”

Arnold still hadn’t completely regained consciousness and stared at the ceiling in a daze.

After the white-robed men had left, Hiiro couldn’t just leave the unconscious Arnold in the middle of the plaza so he carried him to the inn.

“We’re at the inn. Sleeping for two hours is just too much.”

Arnold: “Two hours... Two hours... For two hours?!”

Arnold suddenly bolted up and tried to get off the bed.

Arnold: “Shit!”

Arnold felt a sharp pain on the back of his neck as if he’d just received an electric shock. He immediately hit the back of his neck and his body stiffened up. He tried to get off the bed but couldn’t and dropped back down.

“Looks like you were hit pretty hard. You’ve got a bruise there.”

A black bruise had formed at the back of Arnold’s neck probably because he was hit with the sword’s hilt.

“Kuh... That guy...” Arnold managed to say while grinding his teeth. He rubbed the back of his neck while desperately trying to get off the bed. He looked around for his sword and equipped it.

“Where are you going?”

Arnold: “Obviously, I’m gonna go save Muir!”

Arnold was unsteady on his feet since he still hadn’t fully recovered. Hiiro sighed at Arnold and said,

“That’s fine, but do you know where they are?”

Arnold stopped upon hearing Hiiro’s words. Arnold’s impatience showed through even though Hiiro could only see his back. Muir was that important to Arnold.

Arnold didn’t have any information on the white-robed men so he didn’t know their whereabouts.

Arnold: “If it’s only been two hours, they couldn’t have gotten far! If I look everywhere, I’ll find her!”

“That’s an inefficient way of doing things.”

Arnold: “Then do you have a better plan?!”

Arnold suddenly came towards Hiiro and grabbed the front of his collar. Arnold was frustrated and blinded by rage.

“... First.”

Thwack

Arnold: “Urgh...?!”

“Let go of me.”

Hiiro had punched Arnold in the stomach. Arnold dropped to his knee and held onto his stomach.

“Argh... Yo-you...”

The pain calmed Arnold down and Hiiro sat onto the bed.

“You won’t accomplish much if even I could land a hit on you.”

Arnold: “I, I know that! But even now Muir is... By those guys... Kuh...”

Arnold became enraged again. Hiiro realized that there was some kind of deep connection between Arnold and those guys. Since Arnold had been on the human continent for a long time it wouldn’t have been odd for him to butt heads with those

guys.

“Who on earth are they?”

Arnold: “... Are you gonna lend me a hand, Hiiro?”

“I’m not that kind of person.”

Arnold had expected that kind of answer from Hiiro and clicked his tongue.

Arnold: “Then there’s no reason to tell you!”

“I want to know. So tell me.”

Arnold: “I refuse!”

“... Did you forget, Old Man?”

Arnold: “... What?”

“You were unconscious at the plaza, Old Man.”

Arnold: “Uh.”

“Should I just have left you, who looked like a dead frog, lying there?”

Arnold: “Urgh!”

“Who do you think dragged you here?”

“Urgh... Hah, got it. But, we don’t have the time to talk right now. I wanna hurry up and find them!” It was only natural for Arnold to say that. There was nothing more important to Arnold than Muir.

Hiiro knew that from the time he’d first met them, the interactions at the plaza also made it more obvious. So in order to give Arnold some peace of mind and to proceed with the conversation, Hiiro decided to tell him some information,

“... Don’t worry. They’re still in this town.”

Arnold: “Really?!”

Arnold brought his face closer to Hiiro and Hiiro glared at him while trying to distance himself.

“He-hey is that true, Hiiro! Is Muir still in this town?”

It would have been fine if Arnold’s eyes only shone with expectation. But his eyes were bloodshot and his nostrils were flaring. At this rate, Hiiro was going to be attacked by a pervert.

“Ah, the rumour is that they’re meeting with someone here. They’re staying on the east side of town, because that person hasn’t arrived yet.”

Arnold: “If that’s the case, we should go now!”

“Wait a second.”

Arnold: “What is it?!”

“I gave you information, on top of that, I even dragged you here. So compensate me, Old Man.”

Arnold: “Guh... But Muir...”

“It’s not that long of a story, is it? Do you have time to hesitate, Old Man?”

Arnold: “Urgh ~ Fine! I got it! Listen carefully.”

Arnold began talking about the white-robed men out of desperation.

The organisation’s name was 《Beast Cage》. Its purpose was the control and elimination of beastman from the human continent. The members of the organisation all held some kind of prejudice against beastman and loathed them.

They wandered the continent in search of beastman and when they found them, they acted according to their principles. This time, they seem to have obtained information on the mother and daughter and came to this town in order to catch them.

Arnold had also been caught by them in the past and was sold as a slave. It was just as Hiiro had thought, they had butted heads before.

Since Arnold understood better than anyone how dangerous the white-robed men were, he wanted to rescue Muir as soon as possible.

There were many people who excelled in battle in beast cage. Arnold had already experienced first-hand how strong and frightening they were. The white-robed men had to be exceptional in order to capture beastman, who had higher physical abilities than humans.

It was an organisation where the strong gathered. There were many other skilled adventurers in that organisation, just like the man who had defeated Arnold.

“I see, so they travel the continent...”

Arnold: “... Hey, oi, aren’t you uninterested in other people? What piqued your interest this time?”

It was only natural for Arnold to ask that question. Ever since Arnold had met Hiiro, he had always insisted that he wasn’t interested in other people. He didn’t even feel prejudice towards Arnold and Muir, who were beastman. To Arnold, Hiiro didn’t even seem human, since he knew nothing about this world’s common sense.

It was strange for Hiiro to become interested in the 《Beast Cage》, an organisation that he’d only just met. Then Hiiro answered Arnold’s question,

“Hm? I’m not really interested in them.”

Arnold: “Hah? But you asked about them!”

“I’m interested in the book they have.”

Arnold: “... Hook^{IX}?”

“It’s book. Book. Why would I be interested in a hook? Stop messing around.”

Arnold: “M-my bad, my bad. So you’re talking about a book. Why’re you bringing it up now?”

“They had books in their wagon. I saw some of the book titles, one of them was called 『Gourmet’s Travelling Journal』 , which I really want to read.”

Arnold: “Ha-hah...”

“But, there was one book I couldn’t confirm. I was only able to read 『World’s Best! Girl’s...』 . I thought I could guess what the title was by listening to your story, Old Man.”

Everything was to fulfil Hiiro’s desire. Hiiro never changed. Arnold felt relieved and shocked at the same time.

Arnold: “Girl’s... Hey... It’s that right? Can’t you guess it?”

“Well, they travel the world so it’s hard to say. I want to look at the contents...” Hiiro said seriously.

Seeing that, Arnold became uncomfortable and was conflicted about whether to leave Hiiro behind or not. But instead he asked Hiiro,

“He-hey Hiiro, that’s everything, so can we go now?!”

Arnold wanted to save Muir as soon as possible. Hiiro hummed in agreement and stared at Arnold.

Arnold: “Wh-what is it?”

Hiiro thought for a while. He could separate from them and travel alone but then he’d lose valuable information about the beastman continent. Arnold was also quite knowledgeable when it came to food and knew how to cook plenty of delicious things so he would also lose the chance to eat Arnold’s cooking.

If he stayed with them, he could continue to eat delicious food. Of course he had more freedom when travelling alone but staying with Arnold and Muir had more advantages.

Hiiro was also curious about the book, such a thick book would surely contain information about this continent. Since the book had sequels, it should contain an abundance of information on this world. Hiiro was overcome with the urge to read it.

It was certainly bothersome to lend Arnold a hand since it was highly probable that they would have to fight with the extraordinary man who had defeated Arnold.

(I should take advantage of the commotion and steal the book...)

They hunt beastman so even if he did rob them, Hihiro's conscious would be clear. While thinking that, Hihiro nodded and got off the bed.

"He-hey Hihiro...?" Arnold had stayed silent this whole time but when he saw Hihiro stand up, he called out to him.

"Alright, let's go steal that book, Old Man."

"Muir's the priority here!" Arnold voice echoed throughout the inn.



[Muir]

Muir was currently crying inside of the wagon. She couldn't move because her legs were shackled by a ball.

(Hick... Uoah... Uncle.)

She was miserable. She couldn't help feeling vexed.

(Why am I always a hindrance?)

Arnold always saved her. Just when she'd thought that she could finally repay the favour, this happened and Arnold ended up getting hurt.

(Would it be better if I didn't exist...? It would be better for him... This way, right?)

Muir's eyes gradually dimmed. If she were to be killed here, Arnold would be released from his chains. Then he would be able to live as he liked. Her existence wasn't necessary in this world.

(Uncle... Sorry... I'm sorry...)

Muir abandoned her other feelings and hung her head down in despair. While doing so...

“Mum, are we going to die?”

Those words pulled Muir back into reality. Muir slowly lifted her head and saw a child, younger than her clinging onto her mother.

The mother gently stroked the child’s head while smiling softly but Muir could see that the mother’s body was slightly trembling.

Little girl: “Is being a beastman really that bad? We only look a little bit different, right?”

The mother let out a troubled smile but still continued to stroke the girl’s head.

Mother: “I’m sorry, Ur. If only I didn’t insist on visiting this town...”

Little girl: “Uh ah, because dad...”

Mother: “Ur...”

Muir finally noticed that they were wearing light clothes for travel. They most likely stopped at this town on their way to their destination and unluckily for them, they were found by 《Beast Cage》.

Mother: “I’m really sorry. You got involved because of us.”

“Eh... Ah, no.” Muir replied nervously because she was suddenly spoken to.

“I’m sorry.” The girl named Ur said in the same apologetic tone as her mother.

Seeing the little girl filled with anxiety and her eyes swollen from crying, Muir knew that she couldn’t keep on hopelessly crying. Muir scolded herself for having such dark thoughts earlier.

How could Muir have thought that it would have been better for her to die, Arnold would definitely be sad if he knew. She understood this fact better than anyone. She didn’t want to die in a place like this. If she died in a place like this,

(Mum and dad will be angry!)

Her parents had told her to be happy and live her life to the fullest for their sakes. She shouldn't betray their expectations by thinking such thoughts. They were still in town; that person would definitely come to save her.

Muir would properly apologize for being such a hindrance. Her spirit was lifted and she felt power swelling up inside of her. Then Muir turned to face Ur, gave her a faint smile and said,

Muir: "It's scary, right...? I'm scared too. But, it's okay!"

Ur: "...Eh?"

Muir: "There's a hero in this town."

Ur: "A hero...?"

Muir omitted the words, for me. Arnold who had always come to her rescue, was just like a hero to Muir. That's why she believed in him. That was the only thing she could do right now.

"Yes, so let's wait and believe in him, okay? If you believe in him, he'll surely come to save us." Muir said while smiling.

Ur turned to face her mother and her mother gave a small nod in return. Ur brightened up and smiled.

Ur: "Yeah! I believe you! The hero will come to save us!"

Muir: "Yes!"

"You're too noisy, Beastman!" The man who looked into the wagon shouted.

Muir: "It's okay. Just a little bit more... It's okay."

Muir gently stroked Ur's head as if she was her own sister and Ur slightly relaxed.

Muir was still slightly trembling in fear but in order to cheer up herself and Ur, she thought to herself,

(He'll definitely come... Uncle. And... I don't know if that person will come but...)

She didn't know much about Hihiro but he wasn't the type of person who would move unless he had something to gain. But if he was to come, she felt they had a chance to be rescued.

(Why... When I think about that person coming here... Hihiro-san...)

It would be good if there was something here that interested him. She could only pray that there was. Yes, all she could do was wait and pray.





“Sir Abel has arrived, Folse-sama.”

Folse, was the man who commanded 《Beast Cage》, he was also the person who had defeated Arnold.

“Okay.”

Folse gave a small bow towards the person his subordinate brought in.

“It’s been a while, Abel-dono.”

Abel was an overweight, middle-aged man. Most of his hair was parted to one side and he had really oily skin. He looked like a muggy man.

Abel: “No, no, you always do me great favours. So, don’t worry. Hah, it sure is hot here, isn’t it?”

All the people around them thought, (It’s just you). Abel was unaware of their thoughts and used a handkerchief to wipe a large amount of sweat off his face.

Abel: “So, can I check the goods right away?”

“Please, this way.” Folse guided Abel to a single wagon.

“Oo-oh! Oho~!”

As soon as Abel saw the 《Beastman》 inside of the wagon, his nostrils flared in excitement. Of course it was Muir and co.

Unpleasant feelings swept through the three upon seeing Abel’s unnatural reaction. Abel appraised them with lewd eyes while licking his lips.

Abel: “Well would you look at that, Ushishi. They’re real beauties ~! I’m always pleased by your work, Folse-dono!”

Folse: “I’m humbled by your words.”

Abel looked at Muir's silver hair and raised a voice of admiration.

Abel: "Oh my ~, what is that girl? Silver hair? How rare ~. Could she be a 『Silver Wolf』 ? If that's the case, she'd be quite the rare purchase! Upon closer inspection, aren't those two from my favourite 《Cat-kin》 2? Ushishishishi!"

Abel's looked at them with his oily face and in a small voice Ur said, "Gross", but her mother put a hand over her mouth to shut her up.

Folse: "So, are you okay with the purchase?"

Abel: "Of course, of course!"

Folse's subordinate handed him the contract and he showed it to Abel.

Folse: "If you could please channel your magic here to complete the contract."

Abel: "I'm always grateful towards you! Ushishi."

Folse: "Not at all, this is one way to use those filthy beastman."

Abel: "Ushishishishi! You're too evil."

The moment Abel's hand touched the contract——

Bwoom

Something hit the contract and a sparkling sound was heard before it bursted into flames. Folse instinctively moved his hands away. The burning paper fell on top of Abel's hair and his hair caught on fire.

Abel: "Ushiiiiiii! Wh-wh-what?! Hoooott!"

Abel quickly put out the fire on his head with his short hands. Needless to say, all the people in the surrounding area were dumbfounded and froze on the spot. They couldn't understand what was happening in front of them. Then someone came down from the roof of a building.

"You are..." As if looked could kill, Folse glared at the person.

“I’m taking Muir back!” Arnold said while thrusting his sword in front of him. His blue hair was ruffled up and he looked angry.



[Arnold]

“Uncle!” Muir had recognized Arnold’s voice and called out happily from inside of the wagon.

Arnold: “Muir! You were safe! I’m so glad ~!”

Muir was relieved to hear his cheerful voice and relaxed. However, she soon stiffened realising that he was alone and surrounded by enemies.

Folse: “Muahaha, I won’t ask why you came here. It’s obvious you came here to rescue the beastman over there, right?”

Arnold: “That’s right!”

Folse: “I remember telling you to value your life.”

Arnold: “Ah, that’s why I’ll defeat you all, and leave safely from this town!”

Folse: “Are you stupid?”

Arnold: “That’s you, for doing something so stupid!”

Folse looked amazed then sighed.

Folse: “You’re a human, why don’t you act a bit smarter?”

Arnold: “I am...!”

Folse: “...?”

Arnold suddenly stuck his ass out at Folse. Then something popped out...

Arnold: “I’m a beastman, Stupid!”

“?!” It wasn’t just Folse, everyone there couldn’t contain their surprise. They didn’t think that Arnold was a beastman. Because he didn’t have...

“But you... Don’t have animal ears?” Abel muttered. Arnold answered him while smirking,

“Pooh, you humans ripped my ears off! By the way, these are prosthetic!”

He stuck out his chest as if he was boasting, but he wasn’t. Because he confessed everything while looking cheerful, he had grabbed their attention.

(Good, just as planned. I leave it up to you, Hiiro!)



[Hiiro]

“Looks like things went smoothly.”

Hiiro stood behind the building and nodded in satisfaction at seeing the contract being burnt. Yes, the contract was burnt with 『Fire 火』. Even if it hadn’t hit the contract, there wouldn’t have been any problems.

If it had landed elsewhere, the people surrounding Folse and Abel would have been confused from a sudden fire outbreak. It was highly probable for them to drop the contract in the midst of confusion and then it would get caught in the fire.

So Hiiro shot the character near Folse and Abel. It was only luck that he had hit the contract. All Hiiro had to do was wait and without a hitch Arnold appeared in front of Folse. Arnold did well in attracting their attention just as planned.

“Alright, I should go.”

Hiiro wrote 『Hide 隠』 onto the back of his hand and activated it. This character dimmed his presence and allowed him to go unnoticed. But the effects only lasted for a minute so he had to hurry.

He moved quickly and headed towards the wagon that contained the books. He moved

quietly behind the people from 《Beast Cage》. As expected from 《Word Magic》, he went by unnoticed. Arnold would also be amazed at the effects of Hiiro's magic. Hiiro nimbly got onto the wagon and took out a wrapping cloth from his pocket.

(Alright~, this is it.)

He wrapped a one kilo book in the wrapping cloth. Then he looked at the book that he couldn't confirm earlier.

『World's Best! Girl's with the Biggest B・O・O・B・S!』

Hiiro stiffened. He instinctively threw it into the back of the wagon and pretended that he didn't see it. He wrapped up a total of five volumes into the wrapping cloth. A minute had passed since he had used 『Hide 隠』.

《Word Magic》 had limitations, so he couldn't write the same word consecutively. He had to use a different character first before he could use 『Hide 隠』 again. Hiiro wrote 『Send 送』 onto the wrapping cloth and activated it.

The wrapping cloth suddenly disappeared from its place. Since he had experimented with this character beforehand, he didn't panic. Hiiro had sent the wrapping cloth to the corner of a flowerbed at the nearby house. He figured that it wouldn't be found there.

Hiiro once again wrote 『Hide 隠』 onto his body and activated it. Now it was time to fulfil Arnold's request.

When they had finished talking at the inn, Arnold had told him that he would cook up an exquisite ingredient for him to eat, as payment for saving Muir. It was just like Hiiro to accept a request for food.

Hiiro immediately headed to the wagon that Muir was on.



[Arnold]

Even though he was in public, Arnold freely moved his tail while surrounded by enemies.

(Did Hiiro succeed...?)

He was anxious because he hadn't heard anything from Hiiro yet. He also hadn't heard Muir's voice for a while now so he looked over to where she was, it seemed that things had gone well on Hiiro's end. Arnold just needed to attract a bit more attention.

Folse: "If you're a beastman, then it's simple. Abel-dono, do you need a male beastman?"

Abel: "Nnnooooooo! I don't need dirty men! I even received this kind of treatment... No, Folse-dono, teach him a lesson!"

"That's how it is. Seems like you'll die here. Certainly there aren't many buyers for male beastman in this era. Don't blame me, if you want to blame something, blame it on the fact that you were born a beastman." Folse sneered and drew his sword.

"Heh! I won't lose this time around!"

Arnold also held out his sword and glared at Folse. But Folse just smirked, looked down at Arnold and laughed scornfully.

Folse: "... Says the race that can't even use magic."

Folse quickly raised his right hand and the people around him turned towards Arnold.

Folse: "I don't even have to do anything."

When Folse lowered his hands, the surrounding people released their magic.

Arnold: "What?!"

Elementary magic such as, fire ball and wind cutter went flying towards Arnold.

Arnold: “ 《Explosive Wind Claw》 !”

Arnold promptly pushed his sword up and down to create a tremendous updraft. He used that to avert the magic coming his way into the sky.

“Hoh, 《Trick Art》 , is it? Not bad, but how long can you keep this up?” Folse smiled coldly while spectating.

Arnold: “I’ll engulf you too!”

Arnold planned to engulf Folse with his Art but Folse had took a big step backwards. When Abel saw that, he also followed him.

Folse: “Try it, Beastman.”

Arnold came to a halt.

Folse: “That is, if you can.”

Folse was standing near the wagon that Muir and co were in. If Arnold was to put his all into attacking Folse, the scale of the attack would no doubt engulf the nearby wagon as well.

Arnold: “Yo-you coward!”

Folse: “Muahah, I would call it strategic.”

“Ushishi! As expected, Folse-dono. You’re not the type of man to be defeated by a beastman!” Abel triumphantly laughed. Arnold got irritated upon seeing his face.

Arnold: “Da... Dammit...!”

The enemy’s magic continued to avert into the skies around Arnold.

Folse: “Well, how long before your Art stops?”

Arnold: “*pant, pant, pant, pant.*”

《Explosive Wind Claw》 used the user’s physical strength to activate so it wasn’t

something one could keep using. On the other hand, the enemy used a small amount of MP to activate their elementary magic. If this dragged on any longer, it was obvious who would be at a disadvantage.

Folse: "He'll soon reach his limit."

Abel: "Ushishi, seems like it."

It was obvious that Arnold was getting tired. Arnold looked at Folse and judged that he could use his Art one more time.

Folse: "Well, if you're unable to prevent it, the next attack should be the last. Don't you agree? After all, it seems like that's your limit. Don't worry, your companion will be taken care of by Abel-dono."

Abel: "Ushishi, she's the cutest beastman I've ever seen. Ah, I can't wait ~ to see her innocent face twisted from grief! Ushishishishishi!"

Arnold inhaled and stared at the two with a thirst for blood. To his enemy, he already looked like he was at death's door, feeling overpowered, he sneered.

"Hahahahahahaha...!? Hehehehe..." Arnold laughed. Folse became dubious upon seeing that.

Folse: "What's so funny?"

Arnold: "... Don't you think I've been behaving myself?"

Folse: "... What're you trying to say?"

Arnold: "I mean this!"

Arnold charged towards Folse and readied himself to use 《Explosive Wind Claw》 .

Folse: "Id-idot! You're going to hit the wagon, too?!"

Abel: "Ushiiiiii!"

Arnold: "This is 《Explosive Wind Claw》 at full powwwweerr!"

Whooooosh!



A frightful wind current built up around Arnold. It engulfed the surrounding 《Beast Cage》 members and forced them into the sky, the wagon was also caught up in the attack and everything was cut up by the wind blades. It was the same thing that had happened with the Barbarous Bears.

The mangled figures of the men came raining down from the sky and the wagon pieces scattered all over the place.

Arnold: “Hahahahaha... Che! You aren’t a normal guy, after all...”

Arnold’s desperately tried to support his body which had collapse from fatigue and looked at the person in front of him vexingly.

“To think you would do that, I take my hat off to you.” It was Folse. At the moment of the attack he had stuck his sword into the ground and braced himself so that he wouldn’t get dragged along in the attack.

The wounds on his body were caused by the wind blades but he was still far from being incapacitated.

(He dealt with it calmly... His commander title isn’t just for show.)

This time Arnold dropped to his knees. He’d reached his limit. He’d put all his power into his last attack but it still wasn’t a match for Folse. Folse looked down at Arnold and said,

“Muahah, but you’re a barbaric beastman, after all. To engulf your friend just like that.”

Arnold: “... Are you half-asleep?”

Folse: “Hah?”

Arnold: “I didn’t hurt a single beastman in that attack.”

Folse: “... What?”

Arnold: “Carefully check the wagon, Bastard.”

Folse quickly turned around and checked the wagon and was at a loss for words when

he found out that there was no one inside. Muir and co, whom were supposed to be inside the wagon, weren't there.

Muir: "Unncccle!"

Folse came to a realization upon hearing that voice. Folse couldn't believe it so he slowly turned towards the voice.

Folse: "Im-impossible... H-how...?"

There stood Muir, Hiiro and the mother and daughter pair.



[Hiiro]

Hiiro secured his first objective, the books, and once again used 『Hide (隠)』. This time he was headed to the wagon that Muir was imprisoned in. Muir and co were surprised at the sudden appearance of Hiiro.

Muir: "Hi-hihiro-san?!"

Ur: "...Eh? Hero?"

"Be quiet."

Muir: "Ah, y-yes."

Hiiro looked at the shackles on Muir's ankle, restricting her movements; there was a lock on the shackles. He'd confirm that the effects of 『Hide (隠)』 had disappeared and wrote 『Open (開)』 onto the lock to unlock it.

The lock had unlocked without a key and Muir couldn't contain her surprise at Hiiro's action. She then pleaded with Hiiro,

"A-ah Hiiro-san, could you please remove the shackles from these people as well?"

He promptly glanced at the mother and daughter and saw that they were the same pair that had been caught at the plaza.

While staring at them, he could tell that they were anxious. In order to save them, Muir continued pleading.

Muir: “Hihiro-san... I know that you don’t save people unless you receive a fee, Hihiro-san. B-but, please! Please, please save them!”

Hihiro stared at how desperate Muir was. It didn’t take much time to save them so Hihiro thought it was fine to rescue them as well. But before Hihiro could move, the mother spoke up,

“A-ah, please take this girl to a safe place, I beg you. I will give you anything you want.”

Ur: “Bu-but! If you’re staying then I will too, Mum!”

Hihiro shrugged his shoulders at the beautiful display of family love. If Hihiro was going to receive something for helping them out, then he might as well do it.

“Then, treat me to a feast later on.”

The three were dumbfounded at Hihiro’s request and the mother began to smile.

“Fufu, Yes, I will cook you my best dishes!”

Ur: “Ur will help out too!”

“... Then let’s get out of here.”

Hihiro couldn’t write the same character twice so instead he wrote 『Break 壊』 onto the mother’s lock and activated it. The lock broke just like he’d imaged.

Ur: “Mister... Are you a hero?”

Ur stared at Hihiro as if she was studying him. He was concerned about the pronunciation of his name but assumed that Muir probably told her his name so he nodded.

“That’s right.” Hihiro simply answered. This time he wrote 『Open 開』 onto Ur’s lock.

“I knew it! Ehehe!” Ur said happily. Hihiro couldn’t understand why she was so happy,

so he scrunched up his eyebrows. For some reason there seemed to be a disgusting atmosphere floating around.

“I don’t know what you’re going on about, but let’s get out of here.”

Hihiro used 『Hide 隠』 once more and grabbed onto Muir’s hands.

“Eh... Eeeh?!” Muir yelped with surprised when Hihiro suddenly grabbed her hands. There was nothing Muir could do even if she was aware that she was holding hands with Hihiro.

Muir: “I, I’m sorry... Bu-but uhm... Hi-Hihiro-san...!”

“Hey, you guys, hold this child’s hand.”

Hihiro ignored Muir’s embarrassed expression and told the pair to hold onto Muir’s hands.

“Hurry up. There’s no time.”

Hihiro was in a hurry. The three people didn’t know what was going on but still held onto each other’s hands. Then just like that, Hihiro left the wagon.

The three thought that they would definitely be found out since they were surrounded but strangely enough no one paid any attention to them.

『Hide 隠』 also affected the people connected to Hihiro.

With that Hihiro accomplished his rescue mission splendidly.



Hihiro and co had managed to slip out of the wagon and was outside of the scope of Arnold’s attack. When Arnold had seen that, he had put all his power into his attack.

“... Mhm? Who’s that boy?” Folsie finally notice Hihiro and frowned.

“Hehe...” Arnold’s laugh reached Folsie. Folsie grinded his teeth and glared at Arnold.

Folse: "What is this!? Who is he?! How'd he escape from the wagon in the first place?!"

Arnold: "... Hehe, how would I know? I simply believed he would succeed. That's all!"

Folse: "What... What is that, Brat?"

Arnold: "I'd also like to know... Anyway, you're the only one left. Looks like the tables have turned."

Folse showed a vexed expression then started laughing,

"Muahaha, you sure can talk for someone in your condition! I'm more than enough to handle the likes of you!"

Folse released a tremendous amount of killing intent which caused the atmosphere to tremble and Arnold's body responded to it. Folse held out his sword and prepared his finishing move.

"Uncle!" Muir suddenly rushed out in front of Arnold and spread out both her hands in front of him.

Folse: "... What're you trying to do, you beastman, Brat."

Muir: "Now it's my turn to protect you, Uncle!"

Folse stared at Muir's determination and something inside of him snapped. The atmosphere changed once again.

Folse: "Puh, just looking at you irritates me. And you've even blown away the client... I'll kill you all now."

Folse looked at Muir's fearful figure in anger and directed his murderous intent at her, then he held out his hand and shouted,

"Flame Bullet!"

A mass of flame clumped together like a bullet, shot out from Folse's hand and headed straight for Muir.

Arnold: "Watch out, Muir!"

Muir: “Uncle!”

Arnold grabbed onto Muir and escaped sideways by a hair’s breadth. The flame hit the house behind them and bursted upon contact.



[Hiiro]

(That’s pretty strong magic. It could easily take down the Old Man if it hit him.)

Hiiro had his arms folded while watching the battle in front of him.

(The others have already fainted from the Old Man’s Art, it’s just the Topknot left.)

Folse definitely looked like a samurai with his topknot and Hiiro’s bad naming sense remained the same.

(Topknot must have some kind of special power.)

Hiiro decided to check Folse’s 《Status》 so he wrote 『Peek 覗』 to find out.

Folse Wagner Lv 58
HP: 888/925 MP: 479/576 EXP: 172089 NEXT: 11001
ATK: 417 (453) DEF: 382 (415) AGI: 245 (255) HIT: 205 (229) INT: 219 (223)
《 Magic Attribute》 Fire

《 Magic》

Crimson Spear (Fire • Attack)

Blazing Mist (Fire • Attack/Support)

Flame Bullet (Fire • Attack)

Burn Strike (Fire • Attack)

《 Titles》

Adventurer • Beastman Hater • Member of Beast Cage • Killer • The Man Who Hunts Beastman • Vindictive • Snake Attribute • Killer of the Beastman with Compound Eyes

After confirming Folse's 《Status》, Hiiro began to calculate the level difference between Folse and Arnold.

(Old Man's level 31 and Topknot's level 58... Old Man's being led on.)

Even though level wasn't everything in this world, it was still an important factor. It indicated one's experience. Folse was also an adventurer so Arnold couldn't win against him in experience.

The plan was for Arnold to find an opportunity to escape as soon as Hiiro had freed the prisoners. But judging from the current situation, it might be difficult.

Hiiro had told Arnold to try and escape by himself and Arnold had agreed but Arnold seemed to be in a very bad position right now. Hiiro just stood and watched the scene in front of him. While Hiiro was thinking, he could feel sweat dripping down from his forehead.

(Still, it's really hot around here with all the...)

Hiiro noticed something and froze.

"Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaahh!"

An anguished scream resounded through the area. Everyone in the area looked towards the voice; what they saw was Hiiro, with his mouth gaping open in terror.

CHAPTER 5

HIIRO SNAPS

The reason that Hiiro Okamura had screamed was right in front of his eyes.

There was a fire and something big was burning inside of it. Hiiro rushed over towards the fire and extinguished it with 『Subside 鎮』.

He slumped down onto the ground and dropped his shoulders. He had noticed too late, most of the books had burnt and only ash remained. Hiiro picked up the ashes but it scattered in the wind.

The wrapping cloth that contained the books that Hiiro had used 『Send 送』 on, should have been here. The scope of Folse's attack must have engulfed the wrapping cloth and as a result it burnt completely.

There was certainly a book still remaining in the wagon but that book was 『World's Best! Girl's with the Biggest B • O • O • B • S! 』 but Hiiro wasn't interested.

Everyone stared blankly at Hiiro's odd behaviour.

"Fu... Fufu... Fufufufufufufufufufu."

Hiiro suddenly started laughing strangely. Something inside of him had snapped.

Hiiro slowly stood up, unsheathed 『Piercer』 and scraped his feet against the floor while walking. Hiiro walked passed Arnold and co, stopped, and then quietly pointed the tip of his katana at Folse.

"How dare you burn up my books!?"

"Wait, those aren't your books." Arnold seemed to have retorted.

"Are you prepared for the consequences?"

"What are you talking about?" Folse didn't understand why Hiiro was so furious. As

soon as Folse had finished talking, Hiiro suddenly disappeared from his spot. Hiiro was actually moving so fast towards Folse that it looked like he had disappeared.

“Tsk!”

STRIIIIIKE!

Folse reflectively drew his sword and parried with Hiiro. Sparks appeared when the two blades hit each other.

Folse: “Damn! It seems that he’s not just an average Brat.”

Folse gazed at Hiiro in recognition. Again Hiiro moved quickly from his spot and before he knew it, Hiiro was behind him.

Folse: “Fast!”

Folse promptly jumped ahead to avoid the attack but he still felt a slight cut on his left shoulder. Everyone was dumbfounded by Hiiro’s fighting capabilities, but Hiiro’s movements were only possible by activating 『Speed 速』.

Folse broadly grinned at Hiiro’s strange movements as he circled around Folse.

Folse: “Indeed, you move surprisingly fast for a kid, but...”

Folse removed the eyepatch from his right eye, disappeared from the spot and reappeared behind Hiiro’s back.

SLASH!

“Damn?!”

Feeling a presence behind him, Hiiro leaped forward to escape the attack but not before Folse slashed his left shoulder.

“Muahaha, that’s payback for earlier.” Folse said while pointed at Hiiro’s wounded left shoulder.

(The colours of his eyes... No, the shape of his eyes are different...?)

Folse's left eye was blue but his right eye looked like an insect's compound eye. Folse had closed his left eye and kept his right eye open. Then Folse pointed to his right eye.

"Muaha, are you bothered by my right eye?" Folse said with a sense of superiority and looked at Hiiro.

Folse: "I don't have any obligation to tell you, but, I'll tell you this. The one who implanted this into my eye was a beastman."

The beastman in the area, Arnold and co, were startled by this fact.

Folse: "The pain and suffering I felt at that time slowly turned into hatred. I will never forgive beastman. I truly loathe them. It's as simple as that."

Folse moved towards Hiiro at lightning speed.

Folse: "That's why, I also won't forgive you for protecting beastman."

Folse sword slashed at Hiiro at a frightening pace but he somehow managed to block it with his katana. Sparks flew as the swords hit each other. Folse removed his right hand from his sword and hit Hiiro's face.

"Gah?!"

Their levels were too different. Hiiro needed to hold his katana with both hands to block the attack while Folse only required one hand. Therefore, he could use his free hand to attack Hiiro.

While Hiiro was dazed after being attacked, Folse returned his right hand to his sword and attacked. Hiiro dropped his katana in shock and was left defenceless.

Folse grabbed Hiiro's collar and picked him up. Hiiro's breath became constricted and painful.

Folse returned his sword to its scabbard and then punched Hiiro in the stomach with his bare hands.

"Gah! Ugh! Urgh!"

Folse punched Hiiro several times. It seemed that he wanted to completely torment Hiiro.

Each blow was heavy. At this rate, Hiiro feared that his HP would run out so in an attempt to use 《Word Magic》 he moved his finger.

To Hiiro's surprised, Folse had grabbed his right hand.

Folse: "I don't know what you're trying to do, but I'm able to grasp all your movements with my right eye."

Folse noticed Hiiro's unnatural movements and stopped it before anything could happen.

(Damn... So he was this strong...)

Hiiro was only level 20 but because he had 《Word Magic》, which was almighty, he had thought he would somehow be able to manage; but the difference in battle experience between Folse and him was too obvious.

There was nothing that Hiiro could do in this situation; he had dropped his sword and he couldn't use 《Word Magic》.

(His eye... it didn't only increase his field of vision, it also increased his physical abilities, too...)

People normally wouldn't be able to calmly analyse things in this type of situation but it was Hiiro's nature to do so.

Hiiro's face distorted in agony. Folse seem to have gotten tired of tormenting Hiiro and drew his sword. Then he pointed the tip towards Hiiro's chest.

Folse: "It's over, Red-Robed Brat."

Folse sneered and readied his attack but then,

"Uwooooooooooh!" Arnold screamed as he threw his great sword towards Folse.

Folse: "Hmph, are you an idiot? I can see you!"

Folse exhaled and easily repelled the flying sword with his own.

Folse: "I'll kill you later, so stay still. Crimson Spear!"

A thin crimson spear made out of fire hit Arnold.

"Gaaaaaaaaaah!"

Arnold promptly crossed both his arms to guard against the attack but the spear exploded upon contact and the impact sent him flying backwards. Muir frantically chased after Arnold and desperately tried to extinguish the fire on his arm.

Folse: "Don't intrude when you're weak. You're just like the adventurer beastman I recently exterminated."

Arnold: "Hahahaha... I-is that so? It was you who did those things at that village!"

Arnold glared at Folse after realising that he was the one responsible for what had happened at Wondo.

Arnold: "Why did you do something so cruel?!"

Folse sneered and said,

"Didn't I already tell you? I loathe them."

"Ah?"

"That doesn't matter."

FLASH!

All of a sudden the surroundings were covered by a dazzling light.

"Guuaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!"

The focal point of the light was right before Folse's right eye. The light was so bright that even Arnold and co, who were quite a distance away, closed their eyes.

"Urrrrggggh!"

Hiiro rubbed his neck and laughed since things were going well. He had used 『Light 光』 .

While Folse had been distracted by Arnold, Hiiro had quickly written the character and waited for an opportunity to activate it. Hiiro escaped from his restraints and looked down upon Folse, who was holding his right eye in agony.

Arnold and co had no idea what had happened and were surprised. They were relieved to see that Hiiro was fine.

(Hoh, I owe the Old Man big time.)

Hiiro had been close to dying but thanks to Arnold, he was able to escape and make his counterattack. Hiiro was really thankful towards Arnold.

Folse grew accustomed to the pain and while closing his right eye, he glared at Hiiro with his left. Folse couldn't use his right eye for a while. When Folse stood up,

“Urgh! Gah! Omph! Ugh!?”

Hiiro didn't waste any time, he quickly punched Folse several times. He ended it with a strong blow to the face. Just like Folse had done earlier, Hiiro pointed to his wound and said,

“Muahaha, that's payback for earlier.” Hiiro mimicked the exact words that Folse had said.

Folse: “Guh... You Brat...”

Since there was a level difference between them, Folse didn't seem to have received that much damage and would soon recover.

Folse's right eye was still unusable because of 『Light 光』 , which left his movements and reaction times impaired.

Hiiro immediately wrote 『Speed 速』 and activated it. Hiiro judged that Folse would be at a disadvantage in close combat so in order to settle the fight, he quickly closed the distance between them.

Folse: "Damn! If this gets too tough then I'll use magic to deal with it! Crimson Spear!"

The current Folse couldn't keep up with Hiiro's movements.

WOOSH. WOOSH. WOOSH. WOOSH!

Hiiro magnificently dodged the crimson spear and Folse gradually became frustrated.

"Tsk! Who are you?! Why would you take the side of a beastman?! You are human, are you not?! The beastman are the enemy! It's common sense! Adhere to common sense!" Folse said.

Hiiro stopped, glared at Folse and said,

"That has nothing to do with me."

Folse: "Wh-what...?"

"You said it earlier, you loathe beastman. I can understand where you're coming from."

Folse: "..."

"But that has nothing to do with me."

Folse: "What?!"

"You ruined my fun... So, I won't forgive you."

Of course Hiiro was talking about the books being burnt but Folse was dumbfounded at Hiiro's words; he had no memory of ruining Hiiro's fun.

"If common sense means that you win, then I will distort your common sense."

"Wha-!"

"When I defeat you, that is!"

Hiiro thought that the true value of 《Word Magic》 was that it distorted common sense. Just as Hiiro was about to obtain victory,

“That’s right! You’re going to loseeeeeee!” Ur uttered as she came close to Muir.



“Ur, noooo!”

Her mother was surprised when Ur had left her side unnoticed.

“You weird-eyed freeeeaaaak!”

Folse heard Ur’s screams and blood rushed to his head; his thirst for blood increased.

Folse: “... What did you say?”

Ur: “Freak! Freak! Freak! Freak! Freak! Freak! Freak! Freeeeeeaaaaaak!”

Folse: “... It seems that you want to die. Then so be it! Flame Bullet!”

Flame bullets shot towards Ur. If a child like Ur was to receive a direct hit, she would be instantly killed. Ur’s eyes widened at the sudden attack. Her mother loudly shouted her name.

“It’s dangerous!”

Muir ran towards Ur and protectively shielded her.

“Muuuuuuir!” Arnold shouted but he couldn’t move because his body was too wounded. Muir tightly shut her eyes in resignation. However, her body began to float.

KER-THUMP!

By the time she noticed, Muir was enveloped by a warm body. She remembered this feeling. It was the same feeling that she had several days ago when the Barbarous Bear attacked her.

At that time she was also saved in the nick of time and was held like this. The person who had saved her before and even now, was Hiiro.

Muir: “Eh... Hiiro-san...?”

“Sheesh, you’re a hindrance so get away.” Hihiro bluntly said as he held the two in his arms. His left arm was horribly burnt. The attack had hurt him while he was saving Muir and Ur.

Muir: “Hi-Hihiro-san... Your arm...”

Muir’s faced paled when she realized that Hihiro had been hurt because of her. Hihiro was indifferent and he had the same surly expression on his face.

“This can’t even be called an injury.”

Folse glared at Hihiro full of hatred.

Folse: “Tsk, it missed?”

“Sorry, but I will be protecting them.”

That was Arnold’s request. But the two children who had heard this, blushed upon Hihiro’s words.

Ur simply thought that Hihiro was cool. Muir on the other hand, had never been protected by another man other than Arnold so the impact of the words were quite large.

“Hey.”

“Ye-yesh!” Muir said in a weird voice.

“Anyway, get away.”

Muir: “Y-yes! Fank you very mu...”

“... Fank?”

Muir: “... A... Ah...”

Hihiro tilted his head in wonder at Muir, who had her head hung down and vapour coming out of her head. Muir blushed at fumbling over her words while thanking Hihiro.

“Whatever, just get away!”

Muir: “Y-yes! Le-let’s go Ur-chan!”

Ur: “Ok-okay!”



Seeing Muir and Ur leave, Hiiro felt relieved at the fact that he could finally fight freely.

“Seeing you really irritates me! But you’re still unable to move freely with that arm!”
Folse said with a smirk.

With a, “Hah” Hiiro sighed in amazement at Folse.

“Don’t sound so superior.”

Folse: “... Hhm?”

Hiiro wrote 『Heal 治』 onto his left arm and activated it. A blueish-white magic covered the injury and it instantly healed. Hiiro’s face, that Folse had punched, was also completely healed.

“Wh-what?!” Folse was completely surprised.

“Now I can move freely. Did you say something?”

Folse: “... Wh-what are you...? Healing magic? The light from earlier as well, so you’re a light magic user!”

It was common knowledge that only light magic was capable of producing healing magic. That was why Folse came to the conclusion that Hiiro was a light magic user. Folse didn’t know that he had completely missed the mark.

“Who knows? You’re free to think that if you’d like.”

Light magic was a rare attribute. Originally it could only be used by the 『Spirit Race 』. Folse realized that Hiiro wasn’t someone he should take lightly.

Folse: "It seems that it's time to stop playing around. I'll blow you away with my strongest magic!"

This time Folse used two hands instead of one. Hihiro put up his guard while looking at Folse and moved his finger in a way that wouldn't get noticed.

Folse: "Now, turn into soot!"

Ten fireballs appeared around Folse, they were all around the size of a volleyball.

"Burn Strike!"

The ten fireballs flew towards Hihiro with tremendous momentum.

BANG BOOM BAM!

Dreadful heat and impact sounds enveloped the area that the fireballs had rained down on.

Arnold: "Hiiiiirro!"

Muir: "Hiiirro-ssannn!"

Arnold and Muir's screams could be heard from afar. If someone had taken a direct hit from such strong magic, they'd be done for. But Muir and co had worried needlessly as Hihiro jumped out of the cloud of dust unharmed.

Muir: "Hihiro-san!"

Seeing Hihiro's unharmed figure, Muir smiled. Folse had anticipated what Hihiro would do and aimed his next attack.

Folse: "I knew that's where you'd attack from! Die! Flame Bullet!"

Hihiro fired a character while aiming for the flame bullets then the big ball of fire gradually became smaller and smaller on its way towards Hihiro.

Hihiro lowered his body and leaped to the front. The fireball passed over his head and gradually disappeared. The character he had used was the same one he used to

extinguish the flames from the burning books, 『Subside 鎮』.

It took a bit of time for the flames to be extinguished so Hiiro had to bend down in order to avoid it. Seeing Hiiro bend on the ground, Folse had no idea what had occurred and widened his eyes in surprise.

Folse: “Wh-what did you do!?”

“Hmph, you best watch your feet, Topknot.”

Folse: “What?”

Hiiro had already made his next move while listening to Folse’s shout. He wrote a character onto the ground and activated it. The character glowed a blueish-white light, then sparkled like an electrical discharge. Folse was surprised at the sudden uncomfortable feeling at his feet.

Folse: “I, I can’t move?! Wh-what is this!?”

Folse frantically tried to move his feet from the spot but his feet were stuck to the ground. Seeing the ground become like glue^x, Folse’s confusion increased.

『Sticky 粘』

That was the character that Hiiro had written on the ground and just like he’d imagined, the ground turned into glue.

Folse: “Yo-you did this!? You can use earth magic as well!?”

Hiiro looked at Folse, who was stuck on the spot, he adjusted his glasses and then laughed coldly. Folse’s face grew pale upon seeing Hiiro’s expression.

Folse: “Wh-what! What are you planning to do?!”

“You’re confident against fire, aren’t you?”

Folse: “... S-so what?!”

“A fire magic user being defeated by fire. Wouldn’t that be interesting?”

Folse: "... Eh?"

Hihiro wrote 『Burn 燃』 and released it; it splendidly hit its target.

"Guuoooooooooaaah!"

Folse's body suddenly started burning.

"Oh ~ oh, you burn well!"

Folse dropped to the ground and his whole body fell into the 『Sticky 粘』 ground. He frantically tried to free his body but couldn't move at all.

The flame had done less damage to Folse than ordinary people, since he was a fire magic user and thus had fire resistance. Even though there was less damage, Folse was still badly burnt.

"You should have learnt your lesson. On who you should pick a fight with."

The fire finally subsided. While faintly breathing, Folse said,

"... Y-you..."

"Oh? You're still conscious? As expected of a fire magic user."

Hihiro was honestly surprised. Resistance was a larger factor than he had thought.

Folse: "Y-you... What... Are you...?"

"What am I? Well now."

After thinking for a little while, Hihiro put his hand on his chin, looked down on Folse then answered,

"I'm just a unique cheat."

Folse: "What... Is that...?"

"Well, find out for yourself."



Folse: “Ar... Argh... I’ll remember...”

“Hah?”

Folse: “I’ll remember... Yer^{XI}... Face... And their face’s too...!”

Hiiro was surprised that Folse wanted payback when he was already beaten this badly. Perhaps Folse would continue to chase him from now on. However,

“Oh, really?”

Hiiro looked like he didn’t care. He had already lost interest. Hiiro was about to leave but decided to stop and said,

“Ah, by the way you’re completely naked right now. You Perverted Topknot.”

Folse’s clothes had completely burnt away. It was fortunate that he fell face down, so his private parts were concealed. But his wobbly butt was still exposed.

“Gooooaaahh! I’ll never forget thiiiiissss!” Folse shouted while squirming and Hiiro sighed.

(It’ll be troublesome if he pursued us. Should I use 『Forget 忘』 for this...)

While he was thinking this, he asked himself if it was alright to just use it on Folse. It wasn’t just Folse who knew about them, his unconscious subordinates did as well.

『Forget 忘』 didn’t completely erase one’s memory. There was a possibility for the memory to be recalled with the right trigger. At least, that was what Hiiro thought.

In order to completely erase this incident, he had to use forget on everyone here. Since even if Folse forgot, if his subordinate were to ask about this incident in detail then Folse would definitely remember it.

Since Hiiro had yet to use this character, he didn’t know the effects of it. It would be meaningless to use it, if the effects only lasted for one minute.

(It’s inevitable. If he pursues me, I’ll just have to beat him again.)

Hiiro's level had increased while fighting Folse. From here on out he just had to keep increasing his level. That way, if Folse chased him, Hiiro could turn the tables on him without having to rely 《Word Magic》 .

Folse was yapping noisily so Hiiro picked up the rock that had rolled under his feet,

Folse: "Nghh!"

Hiiro threw the rock at Folse's head to shut him up. Folse's eyes rolled back and he lost consciousness. People began gathering at where they were. Hiiro judged that it would be better to get out of here before things got troublesome.

"Hey, Old Man. Let's get out of town."

Arnold: "Sure."

Arnold had used up most of his strength in the previous battle but he seemed to have recovered a little by resting. Muir moved closer to Arnold and put his hand around her shoulders to support him.

Ur also hugged her mother tightly, she was happy to be safe. They walked towards Hiiro and,

Mother: "Thank you so much for saving us! How can I ever thank you?!"

"It's fine. After all, it's part of the request."

Arnold: "... Request? What's this about?"

Arnold had indeed made a request for Muir's rescue but he had forgotten about the existence of the mother and daughter, therefore he did not commission Hiiro to rescue them.

"Ah, you see..." Muir told Arnold about what had happened when Hiiro rescued her.



[Arnold]

Muir told Arnold what had happened during the rescue.

“You... You really...”

Arnold was surprised since he didn't think that Hiiro would go as far as to ask the mother and daughter for compensation. Arnold scornfully stared at Hiiro.

“We live in a world of give and take. If you want me to do something, you'll have to compensate me with something I want.” Hiiro clearly declared, Arnold and Muir smiled bitterly. They understood once again that their travelling companion was an eccentric realist.

“Ah, the books were burnt, but... What was it? The book that you partially—-.”

Hiiro frighteningly stared at Arnold and he cut his sentence short.

(I, I thought so. It's that kind of book...)

Arnold pitied Hiiro. Hiiro was also a man, he should be interested in such books as well, but Arnold didn't say it aloud since Hiiro would only look at him angrily.

(But this time... If it wasn't for his help, it would have been impossible... Who is he?) Arnold stared at Hiiro and asked himself.

Hiiro had high physical ability for someone from the 『Human Race』 and above all else his magic attribute was unknown. As far as Arnold could tell, Hiiro concentrated magic power into his finger and seemed to write something that Arnold couldn't discern. Or rather, Arnold had never seen writing like that before. Furthermore, whenever Hiiro released the letter, something happened. It was unfamiliar magic to Arnold.

(I'll ask him when I get the chance.)

Arnold made up his mind since he was interested in Hiiro's magic. But right now he had to prioritise getting away.

“Waaaaaaaaaaaaait~!”

Arnold heard someone screaming. Everyone turned around and it was,

“I won’t let you get away! Ushishishishi!”

It was the Greasy Chubby. His name was Abel. Abel had been caught up in Arnold’s 《Explosive Wind Claw》 and was blown off somewhere. But it seemed that he was fine, although a bit tattered. Hihiro sighed in annoyance and smoothly drew his katana.

“Hey, Oily Combover.”

Abel: “Oily Combover?!”

Abel’s hair was certainly mostly parted to one side and he was a greasy chubby. As expected of Hihiro’s naming sense.

“Be quiet if you don’t want to die.”

It sounded like something a villain would say. But when Abel heard Hihiro’s words,

Abel: “P-puh! The reinforcements from 《Beast Cage》 will be arriving soon! I called them! You won’t be getting away! Those beastman are mine!”

Abel pointed towards Muir and co then with a smile,

“Ushiishishishi! This time, you’ll be returning the favour by giving me your utmost service!”

Abel laughed harshly. Someone was briskly approaching from behind Abel but he didn’t notice.

Upon seeing the person, Ur and her mother gasped and a look of relief appeared on their faces. Arnold and co’s eyes widened in surprise because they had seen, no, had met that person somewhere before. The person came up behind Abel and,

“Hoh, and what would that be?”

Abel: “Ushishi! That should be obvious! I will be pleased by those bodies, until I’m

fully satisfied! Ushishishishi!”

“Hohoh, by who?”

Abel: “Mhm? I would like to start with the silver haired girl, but as I thought, I’ll do the mother and child first! Yup, yup, especially that girl, she has such an outrageous body despite being a beastman... Wait... Who are you?”

Abel finally noticed that someone else was talking to him and slowly turned around. There stood an extremely angry skinhead man with a devilish expression on his face. That man was definitely someone they had met before. His name was Raab.

Raab gripped Abel’s head with his big hands, using his full strength and turned Abel to face him.

Raab: “Oi, you certainly said you want to shame the mother and daughter over there, right?”

Abel: “Eh... Ah... Weeeeelll...”

Abel completely withered under Raab’s strength. Abel’s body was trembling and rattling, his body had unintentionally added a vibrator function. Raab raised Abel’s body into the air with one hand and brought him up to his face.

Raab: “Now you, listen here.”

Abel: “Ye-yesh!”

Raab: “That divine beautiful woman and the charming beautiful girl are...”

Raab suddenly released his hands from Abel’s face. Raab swung his thick muscular arms below him and uppercutted Abel in the chin.

CRAAACK!

Abel: “Buyahhhhh!”

The sounds of bones breaking resounded through the area and Abel was sent flying through the sky like a rocket.

“Papaaaaa!”

(Huh, Papa?) Hiiro and co were dumbfounded upon those words.

Ur and her mother walked towards Raab. Ur leaped into Raab’s arms and he gently stroked her head. Her mother sighed in relief and her eyes teared up. They talked about something for a while then Raab called out to Hiiro and co.

Raab: “It seems that I’m in your debt again! But, just like the Chubby said, reinforcements are on their way. I prepared a wagon outside of town, please come.”



Raab: “Thank you so much! I am so grateful towards you!”

Raab was a skilled adventurer and his skills were famous amongst other adventurers. Hiiro remembered that Arnold had a question he wanted to ask.

It was obvious that Raab was someone from the 『Human Race』 and Hiiro doubted his ears when he had heard Ur call him, papa. Before anyone could ask, Raab had readily provided an answer.

A while back while he was out adventuring, Raab had received a potentially fatal wound. The ones who saved him were Ur and her mother, Jill. They lived quietly in a small cabin that Jill’s deceased husband built.

Raab had stumbled upon the cabin and Jill, who saw that he was covered in wounds, just couldn’t leave him to die. Naturally, they knew that the relationship between beastman and the human race were tense in this period. But even if they were going to receive abusive language, they couldn’t just abandon an injured person.

When Jill and Raab’s locked eyes after he awoke, she were ready for mockery and contempt but his actual words froze her.

『Beautiful! I have never met such a beautiful person before! 』

Those words were surely shocking.

Raab: "So then I made a ferocious attack! Gahaha!"

Raab laughed heartily and Arnold and Muir stared blankly at him. Falling in love at first sight and even proposing was definitely bold of Raab.

"But Honey, why're you here? You said it would take about three days for you to get to this town..."

Raab's eyes sparkled and he laughed upon hearing Jill's words.

Raab: "You idiot. You'll be lonely waiting for three days, right? It's obvious that I wanted to see you and Ur as soon as possible, so I swiftly finished my work."

Jill: "Honey..."

The two stared at each other and held hands, creating a pink ambience.

Muir covered her eyes with her hands but peeked through her fingers while saying, "Awawa".

Raab and co split up before arriving at this town. Raab went off to do a quest in the nearby forest while Jill and Ur waited in town. Unluckily for them, 《Beast Cage》 had received intel on them.

Raab: "Still, I'm glad you're safe."

Jill: "Yes, they saved us."

Ur: "Yeah! Hero-san saved us!"

"Mhm? Hero-san?"

Raab tilted his head and Muir twitched at Ur's words.

Ur: "Yeah! Hey, onee-chan! Hero-onii-chan really did come save us, just like you said onee-chan!"

Muir: "Eh... Ah, yes, th-that's right."

Seeing the sparkle in Ur's eyes, Muir couldn't tell her that the hero she was thinking of

was Arnold.

Raab: "Once again, I'm so thankful to you! Mhm, your names are...?"

"Ah, my name's Arnold. This girl here is Muir and that extremely anti-social person is Hihiro."

It seemed that Arnold needed to learn manners about revealing a person's name involuntarily. But since they didn't seem like bad people, Hihiro remained silent.

"I see. Thank you for saving my family, you three!"

Raab had a scary face but he was earnestly thanking them. So he left a very favourable impression on Arnold and Muir.

Come to think of it, Raab had also earnestly apologised for frightened Muir when they had first met. At that time, they never would have thought that they'd run into the man, wanting 《Frog Bee Needles》, again so soon.

Arnold: "Ah no, we only helped out because Muir was also caught by them."

Raab: "Even so, thank you. I also want to thank you for that time as well."

Jill: "Thank you so much."

Ur: "Thanks, Uncle and Hero-san!"

Arnold: "Un-uncle... We-well Muir calls me that too, so it's fine but... I'm still young..."

Arnold was once again reminded of his position upon hearing the little girl call him Uncle. This made him a little sad. If possible he wanted to be called onii-chan.

GRUUUMBLE!

Suddenly a rumbling sound could be heard nearby and everyone turned towards it. There stood Hihiro with his arms pressed to his stomach.



[Hiiro]

Jill: “Oh my, oh my, fufufu. Now I will have to display my abilities so that I can express my gratitude and pay the request fee.”

Jill rolled up her sleeves and pulled out cooking utensils one after another from a bag at the back of the wagon.

Jill: “Ur, help me out.”

Ur: “Yes ~.”

Muir: “Ah, I will help out too!”

Arnold: “A chef like me can’t stand here and do nothing!”

Apparently they wanted to treat Hiiro to a feast right here. Hiiro thought it was about time and waited in anticipation.

Raab was away from the wagon, he had gone out patrolling for pursers in the surrounding area. Hiiro was drooling from the aroma of the food and waited quietly.

By the time Raab had returned the dishes were done. There were no pursers so everyone could comfortably enjoy the food.

Raab: “Be grateful, Rascals! My beautiful wife’s cooking is superb!”

Hiiro gasped in admiration at the food that was served out in front of him.

Jill: “This is 《Clover Rat Meat》, it is soft and nutritious. The sauce on top is made by mixing 《Blue Plums》 and 《Orchy Fruits》. This over here, is the salty-sweet 《Winter Melon Rice》, it is made by crushing 《Winter Melon》 and mixing it in with the rice. I have made some other food, as well. Eat as much as you would like.”

Everyone said, “Bon appetite” and then put the food into their mouth.

“... This is delicious.”

Hihiro enjoyed eating the 《Clover Rat Meat》 which tasted like roast beef. The meat was very tender and the sour sauce matched it perfectly.

The 《Winter Melon Rice》 looked like fried rice. Its salty-sweet taste simulated his mouth and the more he ate it the more his mouth watered.

Jill's cooking was indeed superb, just as Raab had said. Jill had made enough to feed an entire army, so Hihiro could eat to his heart's content and was satisfied.

Raab: "Haa~, look at that, Arnold. The way Ur's eating her food is just like an angel~."

Arnold: "Heh, you're too soft, Raab. See there! The girl next to her looks even more like an angel!"

The two got along unexpected well and was now displaying their dottiness towards their daughters with a bewitched look on their faces.

Raab: "Hah? What're you on about? There's no angel cuter than Ur."

Arnold: "Hahaha, oi, oi, Brother. Look carefully. That glistening silver hair, those adorable eyes, plumped cheeks and that cute small mouth. No matter how you look at it, she looks like an angel, no, she is an angel, right?"

Raab: "Hohoh, so what you're trying to say is that my Ur loses to Muir?"

Raab was laughing but a dark aura was flowing out from behind him.

Arnold: "Rest assured, Raab. No one can win against Muir's cuteness!"

Raab: "Bullshit! That's my line, Idiot! You don't know this but, Ur wakes me up with a good morning and a tap on the head!"

Arnold: "Whhhhhaat?! I'm so envious of you!"

Raab: "Fufufu, how is it!? Ur was so cute, it was like I was in heaven with an angel! When I'm hungover, seeing her heals me immediately!"

Arnold: "Argh... To-today I sweated a lot, right? My Muir wiped my back with a warm wet towel!"

Raab: “Th-that’s awesomeeee!”

Raab grasped his fists while nodding his head and decided that he would definitely get Ur to wipe his back next time.

“Now, now, don’t make such a fuss you two.” Jill rebuked as she stood in between them.

Raab: “Urg... Bu-but Jill...”

“No buts. They’re both cute. Isn’t that all that matters?”

Hearing Jill’s words, the two looked at each other in mutual understanding, grinned then held onto each other’s shoulders.

Raab: “Yeah! Cute is justice!”

Arnold: “Yeah, that’s right! Muir and Ur are both angels!”

Jill: “Goodness, those two.”

Jill shrugged her shoulders in amazement. However at that moment, Arnold’s and Raab’s face stiffened and their eyes flew out of its socket at the scene in front of them.

Ur: “Onii-chan, eat this too!”

Muir: “Aa-aaah Hihiro-san! Th-this is delicious too!”

For some reason, Ur and Muir were both sitting on either side of Hihiro and were presenting him with food from their plates. As a bonus, they were both blushing.

“Mm? You guys aren’t eating? Then, I’ll take it.”

Hihiro took food off their plates and ate it. Ur and Muir were smiling happily. Jill smiled as she watched the scene.

Jill: “My, my, fufufu. You’re so popular, Hihiro-kun.”

There were two people who couldn’t tolerate the scene in front of them.

Raab: “H-hey Arnold, what’s the meaning of this?”

Arnold: “Hahaha, it’s okay, Raab. It’s surely a mistake.”

Arnold and Raab both forced smiles as a vein popped up on both of their foreheads.

Ur: “Hey, oniichan. You’re pretty strong! And you’re pretty cool too! Hey, hey, maybe I should become your bride! Ehehe!”

Raab: “Uuur-chaaaaan! Be-becoming a bride!? Ar-aren’t you a little too hasty?!”

Ur: “Well ~, I’m my mum’s child, so I’ll grow up to be a beautiful woman!”



Jill, her mother was most certainly a stylish beautiful woman. That's why Ur who has her blood flowing through her, would no doubt become a beauty in the future.

Muir: "Awawawawa! Bu-buuut..."

Muir became flustered by Ur's innocence. Hihiro was focused on his meal and didn't hear a single thing they had said. The two men who were watching those three...

Raab: "He-hey Arnold, what should I do to keep that brat away from Ur? I won't give my beloved daughter to that brat!"

Arnold: "Hahaha, don't worry Raab. We're about to leave on a journey so your daughter's fine. I'm the one who has to worry since I'll be travelling together with him. I'm so jealous of Hihiro!!!! That rascaaaaaal!!"

The two shed bitter tears and like always, Hihiro was ignorant to what was happening around him as he continued to stuff his cheeks.

(It's too bad about the books, but I got to eat delicious food. So it'll have to do. I'll be able to get my hands on more books while we're travelling the continent.)

Hihiro wasn't even paying attention to Arnold and co.

EPILOGUE

After the meal, Raab took them to a nearby town in his wagon.

Arnold: "Are you leaving already, Raab?"

Raab: "Ah, the pursers from beast cage will probably still come after us. So, we'll be heading to the beast kingdom someday."

Adventurers called the human continent; the human world, the beast continent; the beast kingdom and the demon continent; the underworld.

"Isn't it fine if we travel together?"

Since they were heading to the same destination, Arnold thought it was fine to travel together. Arnold felt more at ease if Raab travelled with them since he was a skilled adventurer.

Raab shook his head at Arnold's anticipated words.

Raab: "Sorry, Arnold. There's a place we have to visit."

Arnold: "Where's that?"

Raab: "Well I am from the 『Human Race』, so my parents and siblings live here."

That's right, Raab was a human not a beastman. Which meant that his family lived in the human world.

Raab: "So I want to say my farewells before I head off to the beast kingdom. After all, my parents raised my brothers and me together."

Arnold: "... I see. Yes, you're right."

His excuse was on point. No matter how freely one lived, their family would always worry about them. There was also a chance that he would never see his family again. That was why it was only normal for him to want to burn the image of his hometown into his mind and tell his family his whereabouts.

Raab: "By the way, you're headed straight for the country border, right?"

Arnold: "Ah, it's currently hard for beastman to live in the human world. There's also 《Beast Cage》 to worry about. Life on the run is harder than I thought."

If the incident with beast cage didn't happen, then they wouldn't have had to rush. After hearing Folsie's final words, Arnold couldn't afford to be careless. Therefore, he wanted to head towards the country border as fast as possible and cross over into the beast kingdom.

Raab: "I see, what about you, Red-Robe? You look human."

Raab turned to face Hihiro. Hihiro replied with a glumly attitude,

"Hah? I'm under no obligation to answer."

Raab: "Hah? This Brat..."

Ur puffed her cheeks out and then looked at Hihiro,

"That was also cool! Right, mum?"

Jill: "Fufufu, that's right."

Raab got angry upon hearing their conversation and a vein popped up on his forehead. Raab rushed towards Hihiro and held out his hand. It appeared that he wanted a handshake so Hihiro shook his hand. Raab's grip was frighteningly strong and his grim face was extremely close to Hihiro's.

Raab looked like a member of the mafia threatening their enemy but for some reason tears were flowing out from his eyes.

Raab: "... I'll thank you. But, I won't give you my daughter!"

"What are you trying to say while crying? Get your stuffy face away from me, Skinhead."

Raab: "Gah... Hey Arnold! I'm surprised you can travel with such an arrogant brat!"

Arnold: "... Haha."

Arnold understood what Raab was trying to say but he was currently interested in Hihiro. So all he could do was smile bitterly.

Ur: "Hey onii-chan! No, Hero-san, cya ~!"

Jill: "Thank you so much ~!"

Raab: "Stay well, Arnold and Muir! Brat, I'll make you cry someday!"

Ur, Jill and Raab all got into the wagon and respectively said their goodbyes.

"... Why does the Old Man see me as an enemy...?"

Unfriendly Hihiro didn't even notice that he had received Raab's wrath because Ur was interested in him.

After splitting up with the three, they decided to stay overnight in the city and head to the country border the next morning but then Arnold said,

"Can I talk to you for a bit?"

Hihiro had an annoyed look on his face but after seeing how serious Arnold was, he also returned the serious look.

Arnold: "Are you going to be fine with us, Hihiro?"

"What do you mean?"

Muir who was standing next to Arnold, also had an apologetic expression on her face. Hihiro had no idea what Arnold was talking about and had a dubious expression on his face.

Arnold: "We caught 《Beast Cage》's attention with what happened."

"..."

Arnold: "I'm sure they'll pursue us. They know we're heading to the country border because we told them, so they might be headed there too. There's a high possibility

that crossing the border would be quite troublesome.”

It was just like he said, Folse had declared that he’d remember their faces. Which meant that he would certainly be coming to catch them. If Hiiro stayed with Arnold and co, there was a high chance that he’d get involved in something troublesome.

Arnold: “It’s also our fault that you got dragged into this... I feel bad about it.”

Arnold wasn’t acting like himself, he seemed to be really apologetic.

Arnold was interested in Hiiro and wanted to travel with him but he didn’t want to bother Hiiro any further. Therefore he would obediently accept, if Hiiro wished to return to travelling alone. Surely no one would pursue him if he were to travel alone.

It was risky travelling with Arnold and Muir and Arnold didn’t want to unreasonably force Hiiro along. What Hiiro said next, completely threw them off guard.

“That doesn’t matter.”

Arnold: “... Hah?”

“I don’t like blaming other people for things that I’ve decided. Of course, being pursued was something I was prepared for beforehand.”

Arnold and Muir stared blankly at Hiiro when they heard his words. It was as if they had heard something unusual.

Arnold: “What kind of stupid things are you saying?”

Muir: “Eh, ah, no...”

Arnold was surprised and taken aback by Hiiro’s unexpected answer. Due to Hiiro’s nature, there was a high probability that he would choose to leave troublesome people. But the answer he gave contradicted that. Of course Arnold was happy at this miscalculation.

“Besides, I told you that I was heading towards the country border. We’re both heading to the same place. If you think that you owe me, Old Man, then pay me back on this journey.”

Arnold: “Hiiro... You...”

Arnold looked at Hiiro and was a bit moved. Hiiro was beginning to think that this journey wasn't so bad after all.

It was true that there were a lot of troublesome things but it wasn't boring. Also the information that Arnold and Muir had would become necessary in the future.

If something happened, Hiiro could always use 《Word Magic》 to escape. He had a lot of confidence in his magic so he could be a bit optimistic.

Arnold had also saved Hiiro from a dangerous situation. He wanted to pay that debt back before they split up.



[Muir]

Muir: “A-ah... I am sorry about what happened. I, I... Even got you injured...”

Muir suddenly took off her hat and lowered her head while facing Hiiro. She wanted to apologise for being a burden during the battle with Folsie.

“I told you not to worry about it, didn't I?”

Muir: “B-but... Uoh...”

Muir looked down in shame before suddenly raising her face again.

Muir: “A-and also, thank you very much for shaving... Ah!”

“... Shaving? Is that a new phrase?”

Muir: “A... Ah...”

Muir had quickly tried to convey her apology and gratitude and as a result she fumbled over her words. Instead of saying ‘saving’, she had said ‘shave’.

Muir looked down in embarrassment.

“Hey.”

Muir raised her head when she heard Hiiro call her.

Muir: “Oh, Ye-yes...”

Hiiro lightly touched Muir’s forehead with his index finger and said,

“If you’re so worried, then get stronger.”

After saying that, Hiiro walked towards the town by himself. Muir blushed while staring at Hiiro’s back.

Arnold grinded his teeth while watching the interactions of the two.

Without realising Arnold’s doting feelings, Muir gently touched her forehead and blushed. Moreover she noticed that her heart was beating faster than usual. Without thinking she pulled her hat all the way down to hide her face.

(Wow ~, for some reason that was super embarrassing.)

Muir didn’t think that anyone noticed but she still unconsciously hung her head down in shame.

“Hey, hurry up. Who said you could rest?”

Hiiro looked back at them displeasingly and adjusted his glasses. Arnold raised his finger and pointed at Hiiro.

Arnold: “Stop messing with meee! You really do piss me off!”

“Stop shouting and do your work, Lolicon.”

Arnold: “What work!? Stop calling me lolicon! The lolicon is you, right?!”

“Hah? What kind of crazy things are you talking about?”

Arnold: “Shut up! Anyway, I won’t give you Muir!”

“Whatever. Hurry up and find an inn, Pervert.”

Arnold: “Argh! Who’s the pervert?!”

Muir watched the two argue and laughed.

(Aha, things are going to be fun from now on!)

She ran after the two.





On the other hand a few days after the incident, news of Hihiro's fight with 《Beast Cage》 reached the 【Human Country • Victorias】. Taishi Aoyama and co were chatting about the deeds of the mysterious red-robed person during tea time.

“Heh, so the Red-Robed guy has been active again ~?”

Taishi turned his line of sight towards the first princess, Lilith and asked while sipping on his tea.

Lilith: “Yes, but this time my father made an official investigation.”

“Oh?” One of the heroes, Shinobu Akamori asked.

Lilith: “Yes, the members of 《Beast Cage》 are certainly human, but the way they do things is too extreme. A lot of people have been complaining about them.”

“If I'm not wrong, they sell beastman to important people at expensive prices and they also put them in the slave markets, right?” Chika Suzumiya said in disgust.

“Even if they are from a different race that is just too cruel.” Shuri Minamoto said.

“Well, this time the red-robed guy saved a beastman child, right? Didn't he do a good deed?” Taishi praised the red-robed person while smiling.

“Yes, but...” Lilith said hesitantly.

Taishi could feel something was wrong.

Lilith: “A-ah, it's about the Red-Robed person. It seems that his characteristics match... That person.”

Taishi: “That person? Who...?”

Lilith: “The person who was summoned here together with everyone...”

Taishi: “Eh... Okamura? Haha... It can't be...”

It wasn't just Taishi, the other three people also laughed. People who knew Hihiro would not think that he was the type of person who helped people.

Lilith: "H-hah, if everyone says so, then it must be right..."

Taishi: "Well, I'm curious about the Red-Robed guy. But I wonder what Hihiro's doing right now? Is he still in this country?"

Chika: "Who cares about that ill-natured guy?"

"Chika-cchi you actually like Okamura-cchi, don't cha?" Shinobu said amusingly.

Shuri: "But, I wonder if he's safe... Okamura-kun."

"What? Are you worried, Shuri? Stop it. There's no reason to be worried for him."

Lilith had said that the red-robed person would also be included in the investigation. A more detailed report will arrive later on.

Taishi: "Rather than that, we'll just do what we can!"

Taishi turned towards Lilith and laughed. Lilith embarrassingly replied with a, "Yes". Chika looked at the scene in boredom and kicked Taishi's shin.



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